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MILTON'S POETICAL WORKS.

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POETICAL WORKS

THE LIFE OF

JOHN MILTON

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(John) MILTON'S
POETICAL WORKS.

With Life and Critical Dissertation,

BY THE

REV. GEORGE GILFILLAN.

THE TEXT EDITED BY CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE.

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THE LIFE OF JOHN MILTON.

ALL biographies are, more or less, skeletons. Even Boswell's Life of Johnson, which is the fullest in the world, is but an outline of its gigantic subject. This is much more true of the lives of those distinguished men who lived before biography had become a necessary article of public entertainment—before conversation was a marketable commodity—who were either lost in the general *melée* of the warfare and action of their times, or who cultivated a majestic solitude, living “collaterally or aside” to the world and their own age. It is remarkable, that the four greatest of all poets, Homer, Dante, Shakspeare, and Milton, are those precisely of whom least has been told us, and the incidents of whose private history are in a peculiar degree at once scanty and uncertain. Homer is little more than a Voice, lonely, melancholy, and powerful, rhapsodizing on the Chian strand. Dante stands forth more clearly from the clouds of the past, but he, too, is surrounded by darkness, and his personality is that of a shade. Shakspeare has been described as a munificent and modest benefactor, who knocked at the door of the human family by night—threw in inestimable wealth—fled—and the sound of his footsteps was all the tidings he gave of himself. Of Milton what we know is only sufficient to make us regret that we know no more—a regret increased by the reflection, that his life was as lofty as his genius, and that his conversation seems to have been as rich as his poetry.

It shall be our endeavour in the pages that follow to condense in brief compass the leading facts known of the great author of *Paradise Lost*, interposing a few occasional comments, and referring to the next article for our fuller views on his poetry and genius.

John Milton was the son of John and Sarah Milton, and was born in London on the 9th of December 1608. His father was a scrivener to trade, and lived at the sign of the Spread Eagle in Bread Street—a street lying—in what is called technically the City—under the shadow of St Paul's. He had in his youth attended Christ Church, Oxford, where he was converted to the Protestant faith, and abjured publicly the errors of Popery, for which his father, a bigoted Papist, disinherited him. The student was thus compelled to enter on the profession mentioned above, and prospered in it to such a degree, as to be able to give his children a liberal education, and to secure a comfortable competence for his closing years, which were spent in the country. There can be little doubt that the hatred of Popery and arbitrary power which distinguished the illustrious son was instilled into him from childhood, and intensified by the recollection of his father's wrongs. His mother's name was Caston. She was of Welsh descent, and had perhaps some sparks of the wild poetical enthusiasm of the ancient Britons in her blood. Her son speaks of her worth and liberality to the poor, and praises his father for his love of letters and his sterling integrity of character. He possessed another artistic taste, which he transmitted to the poet. He was passionately fond of music, and as a composer ranked with the best of that age.

To the unspeakable privilege of two admirable parents was added that of a most careful and copious education. Milton was one of the few who have enjoyed the benefits both of private and public tuition. His first tutor was one Thomas Young, a genuine Roundhead from Essex, who, according to Aubrey, "cutt his hair short," who enjoyed afterwards the honour of banishment to Holland for his religion, but returned, and, during Cromwell's reign, was master of Jesus College, Cambridge. Young, though a Puritan, loved poetry,

and, according to Milton, taught his pupil to love it. He died in the year 1674. When approaching the age of fifteen, his tutor having gone abroad, Milton was removed to St Paul's school. There, under the care of Alexander Gill the master, and his son the usher of the school, he appears to have profited much in learning. Even then he was a hard student, seldom quitting his books till midnight, and frequent headaches gave, in vain, warning of the disease which was ultimately to quench his eyes in darkness. His favourite reading was in books of poetry, among which are particularly mentioned, Sylvester's *Du Bartas* (a vast curious medley of sense and nonsense, childish platitudes and genuine poetry, quaint pedantry and profound learning) and Spenser. It was Spenser, too, we remember with interest, who first awakened the muse of Cowley.

The season of an author's life in which love for books prompts to imitation of their beauties, and the yearning admiration and despair with which the student leans over the burning page of genius are exchanged for lively, hopeful, and determined emulation of its wonders, is always profoundly interesting and instructive, whether it occur late in life, as in the case of Dryden, or early, as in that of Pope and Milton. If the latter could hardly be said to "lisp the numbers," he was certainly a boy-poet. In 1623, while still fifteen, he paraphrased the 114th and 136th Psalms, productions which, amid much that is imperfect and juvenile, discover the ascendancy the Hebrew genius had already acquired over his mind, and something of that unequalled command of poetical language—that knowledge of the magic of words—which distinguished him in after days. Take the following specimen:—

"He with his thunder-clasping hand
Smote the first-born of Egypt land;
And in despite of Pharaoh fell
He brought from thence his Israël.
The ruddy waves he cleft in twain
Of the Erythraean main:
The flood stood still, like walls of glass,
While the Hebrew bands did pass:
But full soon they did devour
The *tawny* king with all his power."

Two years later, he wrote his quaint but ingenious poem on the "Death of a Fair Infant, Dying of a Cough," said to be his niece, daughter of his sister Phillipps. Previous to this, in February 1624, he was sent from St Paul's school to Christ's College, Cambridge. There he seems at first to have been treated with considerable severity, but soon attracted attention by his diligence, his scholarship, and the exquisite Latin and English exercises he produced. At college, too, he wrote his "Sonnet on Shakspeare," and his magnificent "Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity," which alone might have preserved his name, and which seems, more than any of his earlier poems, a miniature of *Paradise Lost*, in all its leading qualities of religious feeling, solemn grandeur of conception, slow and majestic movement of verse, massive strength of diction, language that "may be felt," and the inimitable management of mythological and classic images.

From Christ's College he was, as all acquainted with his history know, rusticated. There is less evidence for the common story that he was whipped by his tutor for contumacy, although it is affirmed by Aubrey. Certain it is that, like many men of genius, he seems to have derived little benefit from his University, and to have cherished little affection for it. He took, however, the ordinary degree of M.A.; and then, in 1632, we see him, with a proud full heart, and having shaken the dust off his feet, leaving Cambridge for the country, to return to its inglorious shades no more.

His father had meanwhile retired from business, and settled in Horton, near Colnebrooke, Buckinghamshire. To his seat the rusticated poet repaired, and remained there from 1632 to 1638, or from his twenty-fourth to his thirtieth year. This seems to us one of the most interesting portions of his life. He had ample leisure for study, and used it in laying up those vast stores of recondite learning which were commensurate with his genius, and on which that genius was afterwards to feed, free and unbounded, as a fire feeds upon a mighty forest. The country around is rich and beautiful, in the *English* sense of that word; and Milton in his solitary walks gathered materials for his descriptions of nature, and we find the groves

and fields of Buckinghamshire reproduced not only in the scenery of "L'Allegro" and "Lycidas," but in his pictures of the arbours of Eden and the valleys of Heaven. His family circle was not numerous, but it was select, consisting of his father and mother, a married sister older than himself, and a younger brother engaged in the study of the law. By living in the country he was enabled with greater ease to preserve entire his personal purity and his temperate and devotional habits. His amusements consisted principally of botanising excursions through the neighbouring country, of musical entertainments, and of occasional visits to London for books, lessons in mathematics, and the like. Here, doubtless, passages of early love occurred, which tended still more to fan his poetic fire, although no trace of their particulars can now be discovered. He seems to have occasionally visited the accomplished Countess Dowager of Derby, residing in Harefield Place, hard by Horton, whose grandchildren performed the "Arcades." According to some accounts, he at this time, in the course of visits to the beautiful village of Foresthill, near Oxford, met with Mary Powell, daughter of Squire Powell, and destined to become his wife. Here, certainly, he wrote those beautiful minor poems, "L'Allegro," "Penseroso," "Arcades," "Lycidas," and "Comus," which themselves constitute a claim to a reputation at least as great as Tasso's or Wordsworth's, even although "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained" had never appeared. "Comus" was written for his father's landlord, the Earl of Bridgewater, and enacted in 1634 at his lordship's residence of Castle Ludlow.

In 1637 his mother died, and Milton prevailed on his father to permit him to visit the Continent. Probably he found his sphere at Horton but too comfortable and contracted for his expanding genius, and it might be that one of those sudden longings for travel which often cross the souls of the solitary had come irresistibly over him. Like Keats, he felt that "happy was England, sweet her artless daughters," but felt, too, a strong desire to see "beauties of deeper glance," and to

"Sit upon an Alp as on a throne."

He wished, besides, to visit Italy for the sake of its music, and designed to form a collection of it whilst there. Having obtained directions as to his travels from Sir Henry Wotton, to whom he had communicated his purpose, he set out in 1638, attended by a single servant. We remember few finer subjects for contemplation or picture than that of Milton in the prime of his life—with youth and manhood mingling on his brow—with his long auburn hair—with his beautiful Grecian face—with a mild majestic enthusiasm glowing in his eyes—with cheek tenderly flushed by exercise and country air—with a form erect and buoyant with hope—with a body and soul pure and uncontaminated—and bearing, like one of the ancient gods, a musical instrument in his hand, leaving the Horton solitude upon his travels to the lands of romance and poetry. How different from the spectacle presented nearly two centuries afterwards, of Byron, soured, satiated, old in passion and misery, although younger than Milton in years, setting out on his journey in search of oblivion! The one seemed a monstrous mixture of Apollo the beautiful, and Vulcan the vicious and lame; the other the very god of poesy himself, as when he kept the flocks of Admetus, or tuned his lute—

“Sole sitting on the shores of old Romance.”

He went first to Paris, where he remained a few days, and was, through Lord Scudamore, introduced to Grotius, then the Swedish ambassador to France, and in his fifty-sixth year. The interview between the young poet and the mature scholar must have been interesting. Milton could appreciate the learning of Grotius, and probably liked him none the less for his Arminianism. Grotius, as his metrical translations from the Greek prove, was far from destitute of poetical feeling, and must have loved the ingenuous and high-minded Englishman. Indeed, Milton's nephew tells us that he took the visit kindly, and gave him entertainment suitable to his worth, and to the high commendations he had heard of him. From Paris he went to Nice, and thence to Genoa, and thence to Florence, where he stayed for two months. He was received with the highest honours by the literati of that city, and became a

welcome guest at their "academies," as the reunions of the learned were then termed. We can conceive the rapture with which he felt himself in the city of Dante, perused the masterpieces of Italian art, gazed on the beautiful environs of the city, and, above all, mingled for the first time, to any full measure, in the society of men of kindred tastes and feelings. Of these, Dati wrote a Latin eulogy on him, and Francini an Italian ode in his praise, and Malatesti dedicated to him one of his works. At this time, too, occurred his celebrated interview with Galileo, then in the dungeons of the Inquisition; surely another theme for the noblest pencil—the meeting of Italy's old saven and England's young genius,—the gray-haired sage, each wrinkle on his forehead the furrow of a star, and the "Lady of his College," with his long curling locks, and a dream of Eden sleeping on his smooth brow; while the dim twilight of the cell, spotted by the fierce eyes of the officials, seemed the age too late or too early on which both had fallen—a meeting like that of Morning with her one star, and day in the distance, and of Midnight, with all her melancholy maturity and host of diminished suns.

From Florence he went by way of Sienna to Rome, where other and yet rarer thrills of delight awaited him. Although few if any allusions to the works of Italian statuary, painting, or architecture occur in his writings; and although some of his commentators have in vain sought to find traces of resemblance between some great Italian pictures and certain scenes in his "Paradise Lost," there can be no doubt that a mind so susceptible as his, drank in influence and inspiration from the sculptures, the paintings, and buildings of the Eternal City, from the dome of St Peter's seen by morning light, and from the ruins of Mount Palatine dim-discovered in the midnight moon. Michael Angelo, like Dante, was of a genius kindred to Milton's own—stern, lofty, ever covered by the shadow of the Infinite; and it were treason against both to suppose that the one was not enchanted by the productions of the other. At Rome, as at Florence, he was treated with the utmost consideration, particularly by Holstenius, the keeper of the Vatican library; by Cardinal Barberini, the patron cardinal of the

English; and by Salvaggi and Salsilli, who praised his powers and learning in verses which were afterwards prefixed to his Latin poems.

From Rome, after two months' stay, he proceeded to Naples in the company of a religious recluse, who introduced him to John Baptista Manso, the Marquis of Villa. This eminent person had been the patron of Tasso, and received with open arms a far greater than he. Such were his attentions to Milton that, in gratitude, on his departure from Naples, he presented him with his elegant eclogue entitled "Mansus," a poem well calculated, by even Dr Johnson's confession, to raise in the noble Italian a very high opinion of English taste and literature. Manso, in his turn, addressed a complimentary distich to Milton. From Naples he intended to have proceeded to Sicily and Greece. How he must have regretted, and how much we also may, that he had not fulfilled his intention—not seen with that anointed and anointing eye of his—

"Etna's fires grow dim before the rising day"—

the vale of Tempe, the pastures of Peneus, the heights of Parnassus, the unmelted snows of Olympus, the gray plain of Marathon, and the marvellous combination of natural and artistic beauties which gathers round the city of Athens; nay, that he had not extended his tour eastwards to those awful lands which must far oftener have visited his dreams, where Siloa's brook still flows, where Olivet still looks down on the Holy City, and the scathed summits of Sinai tower into the torrid air as boldly as on that morning when the Ancient of Days descended on them! But he had heard of the great controversy which was raging in his native country, and this drew him back from what had been the cherished purpose of his soul. "I thought it base," he says, "to be travelling for amusement abroad while my fellow-citizens were fighting for liberty at home." And with probably a few natural sighs and wistful looks cast to the east, he turned his steps and went back to Rome. His language, while in that city before, on the subject of religion, had been fearless and outspoken. This had made him enemies, and had restrained the kindness of

friends. He was now warned that the Jesuits were framing plots against him, and that if he would escape their malice he must "keep his thoughts close and his countenance open." Such warnings and advices he did not regard, but continued two more months in Rome, and altered in no whit either his conduct or his language. From Rome he proceeded again to Florence, and then visited Lucca. He next crossed the Apennines, and went by Bologna and Ferrara to Venice, in which city he spent a month; thence he took his course through Verona, Milan, and along the lake Lemano, to Geneva. In this part of his journey he, of course, saw the Alps; and the eye of Milton, looking at the dome of Mont Blanc, must itself have been a sight. After spending some time in Geneva, where he became intimate with Deodati and Spanheim, he returned through France, and arrived at home after fifteen months' absence. During that time, the scenery and manners with which he came in contact were silently and unalterably daguerreotyping themselves upon his mind; but it is even more important to observe that, according to his own express and solemn statement, he came back as he had gone out, a virgin, free of all taint from the licentious lands he had traversed. Art alone could not thus have preserved her votary, however ardent and sincere—Religion only could.

Returned to London, he hired a lodging in St Bride's Churchyard, Fleet Street, and undertook the education of his sister's sons, John and Edward Phillipps, the first ten, the other nine years of age; and in a year's time made them capable of interpreting a Latin author at sight! From Fleet Street, finding his house not large enough, he passed to Aldersgate Street, where he took a commodious and handsome house, situated at the end of an entry, and in a garden, and received a few more pupils besides his nephews. It has been objected to him that, instead of taking public part in the grand struggle of the age, he should have sunk down into a schoolmaster. Milton was himself the best judge. He felt that he could serve the popular cause better by his pen than by his sword. He sate calmly down, therefore, to WRITE down every species of arbitrary power, and supported himself

honourably the while by teaching a school. In this we see no disgrace and no cowardice ; but, on the contrary, recognise in it the conduct of a man as brave and honest as he was wise.

The mode of education he established was strict and peculiar. Occasionally, however, he relaxed in the hard study and spare diet which he had allotted to his pupils and himself ; and spent with them a general day of harmless enjoyment in the country. In 1641, he published his *Treatise on Reformation*, in two books, strongly and eloquently defending the Puritanic side. He was moved to this the more, that he knew that the Puritans were inferior in learning to their opponents. His opinions on the controverted questions had been made up long before. The accession of such a man to the party of the movement, was of the utmost importance. Its other writers had courage, determination, and talent ; but Milton and Howe alone had genius ; and Milton had, what Howe wanted, the ear of Europe and an imperial command over the purest Latinity, to which only that ear was then willing to hearken. This treatise, indeed, was in English, but contained some of the most magnificent passages of prose in the language—passages, according to Coleridge, as distinctly prophetic of the “*Paradise Lost*,” as the red clouds of dawn are of the rising of the sun. In the same year, he issued, in reply to Bishop Usher’s *Confutation of Smectymnuus*, a treatise of Prelatical Episcopacy. Usher, that “great luminary of the Irish Church,” as Dr Johnson calls him, had at last met his match, not perhaps to the full in learning, but certainly in fervid sincerity, acute intellect, and powerful eloquence. One is reminded of Milton’s own—

“Two black clouds
With heaven’s artillery fraught, come rattling on
Over the Caspian, then stand front to front
Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow,
To join their dark encounter in mid-air.”

We cannot add, however, in this case, although Johnson does in another, that “Hell grew darker at their frown.” Milton treats Usher, on the whole, respectfully, and compliments him on his learning, in his next publication. That was the *Reason*

of Church Government urged against Prelacy, and it was followed by *Animadversions on Bishop Hall's Defence of the Humble Remonstrance*. In the former occurs the celebrated passage in which he announces his intention of writing a Heroic Poem, "not to be raised from the heat of youth or the vapours of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amorist, or the trencher fury of a riming parasite, nor to be obtained by the invocation of Dame Memory and her siren daughters; but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases." He finally closed this controversy with an Apology for Smectymnuus, confessing ingenuously, however, that he was "led by the genial power of nature to another task;" and that in this he had but the "use, as it were, of his left hand." He panted for beholding the "bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies," and had yet long enough to pant.

Hitherto, Milton had remained alone—and his life, on the whole, had been a monologue. He was now to enter upon the married state. About Whitsuntide 1643, when he had reached his thirty-fifth year, he, to use the words of his nephew, Phillipps, "took a journey into the country, nobody about him certainly knowing the reason, or that it was more than a journey of recreation, till after a month's stay, home he returns a married man, that went out a bachelor." His bride was Mary, the eldest daughter of Mr Powell, formerly mentioned as a squire residing at Forest Hill. Hastily got up, this match turned out miserably ill; contradicting for once the common notion that marriages made in middle life are the happiest. His wife seems to have been a gay, commonplace girl, fond of dancing and other trifling amusements—in short, the last person fitted to be the companion of an austere and lofty-souled scholar like Milton. At the end of a month, wearied with the monotony of his life, terrified at the statuesque precision of his habits and character, and sighing after the parties and pleasures of the gay corner from which she came, under pretext of a visit to her friends, she

left him, and when asked to return at the time appointed, positively refused. He sent letter after letter to induce her to alter her resolution,—they were returned unopened; he even despatched a messenger,—he was dismissed from her father's house with contempt. His grief and surprise were soon changed into fury; he determined to repudiate her, and proceeded to justify the step by writing four treatises, *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*; *The Judgment of Martin Bucer concerning Divorce*; *Tetrachordon*; and *Colasterion*. Without defending the loose and dangerous doctrines advocated in these treatises, we must say that Milton's conduct admits of more excuse than that of other celebrated men who have been in a similar domestic predicament. Coleridge's irregularities would have tried the patience of any woman that ever lived. Shelley married too young, and it was not much wonder that such "calf-love" did not continue. Byron seems to have behaved badly, if not brutally, to his lady, and was, we fear, unfaithful ere the one year of their connexion had elapsed. But Milton's wife had nothing to complain of except his austere manners and life, and of these she might have been aware before the marriage. "Hearing his nephews cry sometimes under his severe discipline" is the only fact alleged in her excuse. The truth simply is, they were uncongenial, and had, in the mysterious providence of God, met for mutual misery. But it had been braver and nobler, and in the long run better far for both, had they submitted in silence, instead of kicking against what was their fixed and forefated lot. His principal defence is, that she was the aggressor.

These treatises, new in doctrine, uncompromising in spirit, and bold in language, could not fail of attracting attention, and of exciting controversy. Many sneered at them; some replied in print; others attacked them from the pulpit; and a few rallied around them, who gained the name of Divorcists or Miltonists. It was unfortunate for their effect that they so manifestly sprung from the bitterness of personal disappointment. The fox had lost his tail, and must persuade all future foxes to claim the liberty of cutting off theirs when-

ever they chose! The Presbyterians were especially inimical to his views. They had him summoned before the House of Lords, by whom, however, he was speedily dismissed; and one of their leading clergy, Herbert Palmer, abused his book in the bitterest terms. These facts seem to have determined the balance of Milton's mind against Presbyterianism and in favour of the Independent party. Meanwhile, he was carrying out the principles of his work, by paying his addresses to the daughter of Dr Davis, described as a lady of great beauty and intelligence. He had apparently not heard the Scottish proverb, "It is best to be off with the old love, before you are on with the new." A short time afterwards, he was startlingly reminded of its truth.

Although agonised and almost "driven to atheism" by this distressing event, his mind continued as active and powerful as ever. In 1644, he published his *Tractate on Education*, developing a plan of training rather Utopian, and which seems scarcely worth being realised. Any student subjected to it would have turned out a curious mixture; one-third farmer, one-third pedant, and one-third poet. In the same year, Milton wrote a far nobler production; indeed, his grandest in prose, *The Areopagitica; a Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing*. The most elaborate speeches or treatises of the ancients, the Philippics of Demosthenes and the orations of Cicero, seem but the discourses of Lilliput compared to this. It had suited an audience of "giant angels" better than even that stately senate to which it was addressed. It is almost entirely free from the quaintness, stiffness, and involution which mark his ordinary prose-style, and rises more easily into its altitudes. It is as "thunder mingled with clear echoes;" and amid all its merits, its strong argument, its sounding-march, the "deep organ-tone" of its diction, there is nothing more remarkable about it than its sustained, cheerful, and majestic calmness. One wonders how it could be written by one so strangely widowed as its author had been, and is tempted to suspect that the bright eyes of Miss Davis had in part inspired it. Like almost all first-rate speeches, such as Burke's, and Fox's, and

Chatham's best, it failed in gaining its object, and would have failed even had Milton been permitted to read it in person to the Parliament. The Presbyterians when they got the press into their hands were as unfriendly to its unrestricted freedom as the Prelatists had been.

His father had now come to reside with him, and the number of his pupils increasing, he took a larger house. Before removing to it, he was astonished, upon one of his usual visits to a relation in St Martin's le Grand, to see his wife coming in from another room and beseeching forgiveness. A scene followed, at which some will be disposed to laugh, and others to cry. She fell on her knees, she bathed him with her tears, and he, overpowered by her solicitations, took her once more to his bosom. It was magnanimous conduct, although undoubtedly the scheme was pre-concerted on the part of her friends, who felt the declining state of the royal cause, who foresaw that Milton's star was soon to culminate, and had heard that he was paying his addresses to another lady. This sets, we think, their conduct in a very mean light, and reminds us of that of the Armour family, who persecuted poor Burns when "hungry ruin had him in the wind," but fawned on him, and made him welcome to visit Jean, after his triumphant return from Edinburgh. What became of Miss Davis we are not informed. The Poet removed soon after to Barbican, where he received, besides his wife, his pupils and his own father, his wife's father and mother, after they were impoverished by the success of the Roundheads. Todd has discovered some curious documents, which shew that Powell had been in debt to Milton's father, and that after his death, Milton, to reimburse himself, took possession of his mortgaged property, and so Powell's widow and eight children were left destitute. This is not a story much to Milton's credit, and constitutes, in fact, the one *small* thing recorded against him. But we are not acquainted with all the circumstances. In 1646-7, Powell died a broken-hearted bankrupt; and soon after, Milton's own father expired. Before this, he had published, for the first time in a collected form, his juvenile poems in Latin and English.

In 1647, his family circle having been lessened by the death of his father and father-in-law, and by the departure of widow Powell and her family, he took a smaller dwelling in Holborn, opening backward into Lincoln's Inn Fields, and continued to instruct a few scholars. From this date till the death of Charles I. his pen seems to have remained idle, with the exception of turning into English verse a few of the Psalms, sooth to say, with no great success. If Milton failed, can we wonder that no one else has fully succeeded in translating these divine lyrics?

On the 30th of January 1648-9, Divine Right, in the person of Charles I., was publicly put to death before Whitehall, and the blow "resounded through the universe!" Thousands awoke at the sound—many to scream out contradiction and rage—many to shed bitter tears, and many to express a faint and faltering approbation. Milton belonged to none of these classes, but dared to echo the falling axe, and to cry aloud, "It is the judgment of God." He published a treatise entitled the *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, in which he elaborately shews "that it is lawful, and hath been held so through all ages, for any who have the power to call to account a tyrant or wicked king." This strong and seasonable argument, from the most powerful pen then extant, led to important advantages. Grateful for his aid, the government appointed him their Latin secretary, with a salary of £288 a-year. "As Latin secretary," says an able writer, "his duties were multifarious and somewhat onerous. As it had been resolved that all the government correspondence with foreign princes and states should be in Latin, he had daily to attend at Whitehall to lend his services as a compiler and translator. A collection of the letters written by him in this capacity, both for the Council of State and for Cromwell, is published among his prose works. But, besides these strictly official duties, others naturally devolved upon him in consequence of his general literary abilities." To this class belong his *Critical Observations on the Articles of Peace between the Earl of Ormond and the Irish Rebels*—his *Eiconoclastes*, written in reply to the famous *Eicon Basilike*, the supposed production of Charles I.,

and his *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano*, an answer to the Latin *Defence of Charles I.*, produced by Salmasius, a Frenchman, and reputed one of the best scholars in Europe.

Of these, the first two were published in 1649, and the last in 1651. All made more or less a profound sensation, and were in different measures distinguished by the same qualities—profuse learning—scholastic subtlety—eloquence of a rich and massive but involved and intricate texture—decision of tone, amounting to dogmatism and defiance—a fierce contemptuous bitterness to his opponents—passages of almost superhuman dignity and splendour, alternating with bad jokes, word-playings, and the vilest of all possible puns. On the whole, when he became a controversialist, if not weak as other men, his stature, like that of his own angels ere entering the halls of Pandemonium, was dwarfed and dwindled. Two passages from his *Defensio* are worthy of all admiration—those, namely, describing Cromwell and Bradshaw, pictures which reduce to mere daubs all the sketches of character produced before or since from Plutarch to Lord Brougham.

Salmasius answered Milton's attack by an assault on his private character. Indeed, the personalities on both sides were atrocious and disgusting, as was the manner of that age. Peter de Moulin also replied to the *Defensio pro Populo*, and provoked a rejoinder still fiercer from Milton's pen, entitled *Defensio Secunda*. Salmasius shortly after died, according to some, broken-hearted, owing to the neglect he experienced after Milton's book appeared. For several years thereafter he was principally occupied in his official duties; and having given up his pupils, and finding his health somewhat impaired, he removed to Scotland Yard, and thence to Garden House in Westminster, where he continued till near the time of the Restoration. In 1652, a calamity which had long impended over at last came down on him—we allude to his blindness. This had been slowly gaining on him, and the labours connected with the Salmasian controversy brought it to a point. Of course, there were many to cry out, a "judgment," and to dream that it was a drop of the king's blood which had quenched his eyes! Milton has written more than one noble

complaint over his completed blindness. We could have conceived him penning an expostulation to the advancing shadow, equally sublime and equally vain, for it was God's pleasure that this great spirit should, like himself, dwell for a season in the thick darkness. The same year his wife died in childbed, leaving him alone, blind, and with the care of three infant daughters, the oldest of whom was not more than six years of age. But he was only forty-four—his circumstances were comfortable—his resolution was unconquerable, and he girded himself up to mate with and overcome his difficulties. Mr Philip Meadows was appointed to assist him in his secretaryship, and yet his salary was not at first diminished. He was married, in the year 1656, a second time. His wife was the daughter of Captain Woodcock of Hackney. This marriage was very happy, but of short continuance. She, too, died in childbirth, within a year after marriage, and her memory lives in one of his sweetest sonnets. By and by his salary was reduced one-half, and his duties were divided, although his pen was ever ready to defend the government down almost to the date of the Restoration.

Relieved, first by the appointment of Meadows, and then of the celebrated Andrew Marvel, as his colleague, he began to revolve certain vast literary projects, such as a Latin Thesaurus, a Body of Divinity out of the Bible, a History of his Native Country, and an EPICK POEM. For the Dictionary the preparations were begun, but left in a fragmentary state—the History was commenced after the "Paradise Lost" was finished—the System of Divinity was discovered, and published in 1825—and the design of the Epick was built up into the sublimest production of the human mind. Meanwhile, in 1659, he published his *Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes*, shewing that it is not lawful for any power on earth to compel in matters of religion; and, in the same year, *Considerations touching the Likeliest Means to Remove Hirelings out of the Church*; a *Letter to a Friend concerning the Ruptures of the Commonwealth*; and a *Letter to General Monk on the Present Means of a Free Commonwealth*. In February, he gave to the world what he hoped might not contain the "last words of

expiring liberty," in a *Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth*.

These efforts to retard the Restoration were strong, but convulsive and ineffectual. Cromwell's genius was latterly the one bulwark against the return of Charles; he was now removed, and there was nothing for it but that the nation, "like a tame elephant, should kneel" and receive its worthless rider. The consequences to Milton were disastrous; he had sat for years at ease in his "garden-house," labouring, but not toiling, visited by friends such as Lawrence, Skinner, Needham, and Marvel; visited, too, by foreigners, many of whom came to England simply to see Cromwell and Milton—in the possession of competence, if not wealth—blind, but full of internal light, of celestial cheer, and with great projects passing across his mind, and causing his eyes, as they passed, to twinkle with joy. Now his secretaryship was lost, he was obliged to take refuge in a friend's house in Bartholomew Close; nay, according to some accounts, to give himself out for dead, and to have a mock funeral made for him. His *Eiconoclastes* and *Defensio* were burned by the hands of the common hangman. He was not relieved from danger till the act of indemnity was passed; and, even after that, he was a short time in the custody of the serjeant-at-arms. As we have elsewhere said, although the heat of persecution was abated, the prospects of Milton were aught but cheering. He was poor, blind, solitary—his second wife dead—his daughters undutiful, unkind, and anxious for his death—his country was enslaved—the hopes of the Church and the world seemed blasted—one might have expected that disappointment, regret, and vexation would have completed their work. It was the greatest crisis in the history of the individual man. Napoleon survived the loss of his empire, and men call him great because he survived it. Sir Walter Scott not only survived the loss of his fortune, but he struggled manfully amid the sympathy of the civilised species to repair it. But Milton, amid the loss of friends, fortune, fame, sight, domestic comfort, long cherished hopes, not only survived, but stood firm as a god over the ruins of a world—and not only stood firm, but,

alone and unaided, built to himself an everlasting monument. Verily, he was one of the celestial coursers who feed on no vulgar or earthly food. He had "meat to eat that the world knew not of."

As soon as he felt himself out of danger, he settled in Holborn, and then in Jewin Street, Aldersgate, and resumed his wonted studies. In 1664 he married his third wife, Elizabeth Minshull, daughter of Sir Edward Minshull, in Cheshire. It was a "made-up match," she having been chosen at his request by his friend Dr Paget, to be the nurse of his declining years. Like his other two wives, she was a maiden. He had an aversion to marrying widows. His daughters, three in number, Anne, Mary, and Deborah, acted as his amanuenses till the period of their respective marriages. They were taught to read, without understanding, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, to their blind father. From this slavery it is not to be wondered that they shrunk; but, besides, they are said to have combined with his maid-servant in cheating him, and to have pawned his books. On what terms he lived with his third wife is not quite certain. A little after his marriage, he is said to have been offered the Latin secretaryship again, but declined it. About this time commenced his intimacy with Ellwood the Quaker. This amiable and intelligent young man used to come every afternoon except that of Sunday, and to read Latin to him. Ellwood, though himself an object of persecution, found means to be serviceable to Milton. He had got a situation as tutor in the family of a rich Quaker in Chalfont, Buckinghamshire, and when the plague broke out in London in 1665, he hired there a house for the poet, who removed to Chalfont with all his family. When he arrived, he found Ellwood imprisoned in Aylesbury gaol on account of his religion. As soon, however, as he obtained his liberty, he paid Milton a visit, who put into his hands a MS., requesting him to read it, and give him his opinion. It was *Paradise Lost*! He had commenced this marvellous poem two years before the Restoration, and it had thus occupied him seven years—a time neither too long nor too short for the construction of such a piece of Cyclopean

masonry. His purpose of writing an epic had never been relinquished, and from harsh and crabbed controversies he returned gladly to poetry, like a wearied sea-bird to his nest. It was not composed, as might have been imagined, in slow and regular succession of effort, but at fits and snatches, the "spirit moving him at times," as it did of old his Danite hero. It is curious, that, though the most intensely cultivated of poets, he was most dependent on moods and moments; his favourite season was from the "autumnal to the vernal equinox." Now, he could only indite coarse and clumsy prose, and, anon, "flowed free his unpremeditated verse" in a "torrent rapture" of beauty, music, and power. The poem, though completed and approved of by Ellwood, was nearly stifled in its cradle by the licenser, who detected treason in that noble simile of the eclipse—

"With fear of change perplexing monarchs."

Perhaps, also, he felt some little spite to the author of the *Areopagitica*, who had treated his tribe with such crushing contempt. At length, however, licensed the poem was, and Milton sold his copy, April 27, 1667, to Samuel Symmons, for an immediate payment of five pounds—an agreement with the bookseller, however, entitling him to a conditional payment of five pounds more when thirteen hundred copies should be sold of the first edition; of the same sum after the same number of the second edition; and of another five pounds after the same sale of the third; the number of each edition was not to exceed fifteen hundred copies. It appeared in a small quarto form, in ten books, and was sold for three shillings. We have seen this first edition as well as the third, and, humble as they were in binding, they seemed to our eyes covered all over, like a summer's sunset, with glory. In two years the sale gave the author a right to his second instalment. The second edition appeared in 1647, and was arranged into twelve books. Milton lived not to receive the price stipulated for this impression. The third edition was published in 1678, and, on the receipt of eight pounds, the widow of the poet gave it over entire to Symmons, who sold it for twenty-five pounds to Aylmer, and

from him it passed into Jacob Tonson's hands. It is singular, contrasting this "goodly price" at which the greatest of English poems was prized, with the large sums which have been paid since for Marmions, and Lalla Rookhs, and Childe Harolds, or even with the experiences of our own day, in which, a month or two ago, a young author sold his first poem for one hundred pounds. But readers were then scarce, poetry was still more than now a drug; Milton's name had become odious from his principles, and he seems to have never complained of his bargain. He saw, shall we say, those poor five bank-notes fluttering in the breath of eternal fame? He cast his book upon the waters, knowing that it would be found after many days.

Slowly and surely it made its way. First Barrow and Marvel prefixed complimentary verses to the second edition, then Dryden wrote his celebrated hexastich, beginning,

"Three poets in three distant ages born," &c.

which accompanies the fourth, besides praising it in the preface to his "State of Innocence" as "one of the greatest, most noble, and most sublime poems which either this age or nation has produced." Woodford, Lord Roscommon, Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, and Bishop Atterbury, followed in diversified measures of praise; and even before Addison wrote his long analysis of it in the *Spectator*, its character and fame were established on an indestructible basis.

We must not omit the numerous prose works he wrote before or after the "Paradise Lost." These were his *Accidence or Commenced Grammar of the Latin Tongue*, published in 1661; a *History of Britain to the Norman Conquest*, in 1670; a tract published in 1673, entitled, *Of True Religion, Heresy, Schism, Toleration, and what best Means may be used against the Growth of Popery*—a Latin treatise on logic—a collection of his familiar epistles in Latin—a brief History of Muscovy and the countries beyond Russia, which was left by him in MS., besides the materials for his *Thesaurus*, and his treatise on Christian Doctrine. One is utterly amazed at the industry, the determination, the energy, the power of mind and memory, the almost miraculous

concentration, as well as the multiformity of nature which these works evince. He seems one of his own angels, now talking familiarly to Adam, and now plucking up, and tossing to and fro, the rooted hills of heaven. "Truly," says Johnson, "he was born for whatever was arduous, and difficulties vanished at his touch."

After the plague was over, and the city cleansed, Milton had returned to Banhillfields. Ere leaving Chalfont, he had commenced, at Ellwood's suggestion (who had playfully asked him, since he had sung *Paradise Lost* so well, to give the world something on *Paradise Found*), and finished "*Paradise Regained*." To this, on returning to town, he added "*Samson Agonistes*," and published them both in one volume in 1671. That Milton preferred "*Paradise Regained*" to the larger work has often been asserted, but is not true. According to Phillipps, he merely expressed his mortification at finding it treated as so much inferior to the "*Paradise Lost*." At this feeling few will now be astonished. That the "*Paradise Regained*" is not so long as the other is, of course, admitted. Its plan did not permit such lofty and daring flights; but in Homeric simplicity, in sustained dignity, in calmness of spirit, and nice beauty of image and language, it is superior, and may rank as the *Odyssey* of his genius. More of this, however, afterwards.

But the time was now come when this great spirit was to put off this tabernacle, and join his starry kindred in those regions calm, of mild and serene air, where his imagination and heart had long taken up their permanent abode. The "Lord had shut him in" in his darkened framework, as Noah in the ark of old; but he was now to open the ark and let him forth free, and free for ever. His disease was gout, attended with a general decay of the vital powers. Feeling himself near his end, he sent for his brother Christopher, then a bencher in the Inner Temple, to aid him in making his will. In fine keeping his death took place, amid the stillness and solemn pause of a Sabbath-day. This was the 8th of November 1674. It was a quiet and Godlike dismissal. There were attendants in the room, but they did not notice the moment of his expiration, it was so easy. Milton died, as he had lived, *alone*.

It is with a certain severe satisfaction that we contemplate the death of such a man. We feel that tears and lamentations were here unbecoming, and would mar the solemn sweetness of the scene. With serenity—nay, joy—we witness this majestic manchild caught up to God and to his throne. Were we to behold a star re-absorbed into its source, melted down in God, would it not generate a delight, graver, indeed, but as real, as had we stood by its creation? and although there were no shouting as on its natal morn, might there not be silence, the silence of joyous wonder, among the sons of God? Thus died Milton, the prince of modern men. He accepted death as gently and complacently as the sky receives into its arms the waning moon.

His remains were followed to the grave by “all his learned and great friends in London, not without a friendly concourse of the vulgar.” He was buried next his father in the chancel of St Giles, Cripplegate. The stone laid at first on his grave was speedily removed, and no monument was raised over his dust till 1793, when a marble bust from Bacon’s chisel was, at the instance of Mr Whitbread, erected in the middle aisle of the church. Fifty-six years previous, Benson had procured the admission of his bust into Westminster Abbey. But what need of busts or monuments, any more than of degrees or titles, to him? The plain name, John Milton, more securely preserves his memory,

“Than if a pyramid formed his monumental fane.”

This part of our task is now nearly done. The personal appearance, habits, and manners of the great Poet, are too familiar to require lengthened remark. He was of the middle size, neither lean nor corpulent, his skin fresh and fair, his eyes gray, his features regular, his hair light-brown, parted at the fore-top, and hanging in curls upon his shoulders. In his food and liquor he was not an anchorite, but extremely temperate, his rule being, *Not too much*. His days were regulated by an exact and severe system. He was in conversation affable and easy, although his temper was severe, and he was a “good hater.” His favourite enjoyment was music, and his favourite

instrument the organ. His life, even in youth, and in the countries of the south, was entirely unstained by sensual impurities. His literature was enormous. The languages, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, French, and Spanish, hung like keys from his girdle, and he had employed them to unlock all the treasures they commanded. His favourite book was the Bible in the original, and next to it, Homer and Euripides in Greek, Ovid in Latin, Dante in Italian, and Spenser, Shakspeare, and Cowley in English. Liberty and religion were the two master passions of his soul, although his views of the former were rather ultra, even for our age, and although in theology he was very far from what is called orthodox, being a Millennarian, an Arminian, an Anti-sabbatarian, and verging on Arianism. His personal piety has never been questioned. It was not obtrusive nor unctuous, and would not tell in our "religious obituaries," but was manly, enlightened, sincere, and fervid.

And yet Milton does not seem to have been a happy man. Domestic infelicities, public affairs, and personal neglect, seem latterly to have made him sour, though never savage. In fact, this earth was a sphere too narrow for him. He was "before all ages." Space was his only fitting abode, and eternity his only adequate day. And when we look at him and the other men of his time, we are tempted to say, "There were giants in those days," while we have fallen on the days of little men; nay, to cry out with her of old, "*I saw gods ascending from the earth, and one of them is like to an old man, whose face is covered with a mantle.*"

CRITICAL ESTIMATE
OF THE
GENIUS AND POETICAL WORKS OF JOHN MILTON.

WE have already traced Milton's history. The history of his fame is equally curious and interesting, although it may be told in much briefer compass. Foreign countries heard of his name while it was yet obscure in his own land. His progress through Italy was a procession of triumph, while in Britain his merits were known only to his personal friends. Returned to London, he subsided into a schoolmaster; nor did his works, for some time, dispel the mists which seemed to have gathered, early and dark, around his destiny. It was infamy which first made him famous in England—the infamy of advocating and acting on a new and heterodox theory of divorce, and it was his personal misery which drove him to support this obnoxious doctrine. So that thus Milton's, like man's, greatness had its root in his grief, if not partly also in his fault, and he served to exemplify the statement long afterwards made by another poet—

“ Most wretched men
Are cradled into poetry by wrong,
They learn in suffering what they teach in song.”

Milton, the elegant scholar, was permitted to battle on with his nephews as he best could; but Milton, the “divorcist,” awoke one morning and found himself (in) “famous.” To

this equivocal reputation, his summons to appear before Parliament, for his literary misdemeanours, contributed; and it assumed a hue of richer darkness, when the "divorcist" sublimated into the defender of regicide, and dared to apologise for what Cromwell dared to do. Then, unquestionably, Milton's reputation culminated, although his *fame* was yet following it *haud passibus æquis*. To literary England and Europe he seemed little better than a fierce, discontented scholar, whom disappointed personal passions, and soured pride, had driven to support indefensible measures and theories, by sophistry, declamation, and outrageous abuse, disguised all in noble Latin. Then, ere he had time to right himself by appearing more fully in his poetic character, came the Restoration, and his extensive, though uneasy and unsettled, repute went out like a shooting star for a season. With difficulty did even the great orb of *Paradise Lost* labour up against the obscurity which supervened, especially as it was a "darkness mingled with blood." Such poetry from a regicide was not expected, and, when it came, was looked at with suspicion, and deemed a daring monstrosity like the killing of Charles himself. In spite of suspicion and prejudice, however, the book made its way, and many who hated Milton the Republican and Divorcist, were compelled, perhaps with pale cheeks and gnashing teeth, to surrender their admiration to Milton the Poet. Then came the great man's death, and this, for a time, seemed to exert no perceptible influence upon his fame. The prejudice against his name, and the admiration of his poetry, continued to struggle with each other; nor did even the long and elaborate encomium of Addison fully turn the balance. Indeed, we see the vibration of opinion nowhere so fully as in Johnson's Life, and in some of the notes of Thomas Warton. It was not till the prevalence of liberal opinions, at the end of the 18th century, had taught men not only to bear with, but to believe many of Milton's political sentiments, as well as to admire his genius, that the full tide of his glory set in, and that we may conceive the first smile of satisfaction beginning to break across the look of serene expectancy worn by his Mighty Shade.

It is, perhaps, ever thus in the world's conduct to men of

lofty genius. At first they are treated as composites, and subjected to severe and varied analysis—their creeds, personal failings, and the painful incidents of their story, are considered apart from their genius, and judged of according to arbitrary and conventional standards. At this stage men say, “What a pity Milton was a Republican, Dante on bad terms with Gemma, Burns born a peasant, and Keats bred an apothecary’s boy! what different men and poets might they have become had it been otherwise!” But, by and by, the sublime unity of their Being becomes apparent, and we feel that (always excepting their voluntary vices) the position, circumstances, and callings of men of genius, are precisely what, for the development of their minds, the fulfilment of their mission, and the full impression of their full nature, they should have been. Milton, had he not been art and part in Regicide, would not have been competent to write *Paradise Lost*, or *Samson Agonistes*. Dante’s unhappy marriage added the necessary acid and edge to his character, and fitted him to heat seven times hotter the furnace of his Hell. Burns’ brawny nature took root and vigour from the homely soil where it appeared. Keats’ confinement in London aided him, when he did see the country, to form those fresh, deep, lingering impressions of Nature, which, in general, childhood only is able to feel, and which no poetry but his has fully expressed. Genius always appears in its own dress, whether sorry or splendid, and the wise will be ready to accept both the wearer and the vesture.

Now, we need not be afraid or ashamed to say, that we like Milton better for his Republicanism, and see in it, not a derogation from, but an expression of, his grand and peculiar genius. He was, indeed, that rarest of all beings—a Republican King. Endowed himself with a royal nature, and feeling himself the first of living men, he yet contended for the equality of mankind, and the sovereignty of nations. “Susceptible,” says Emerson, “as Burke to the attractions of historical prescription, of royalty, of chivalry, of an ancient Church installed in cathedrals and illustrated by old martyrdoms, he threw himself, the flower of elegance, on the side of the reeking conventicle—the side of humanity unlearned and

unadorned." This (although we question the propriety of the terms "reeking and unlearned," applied to churches where Owen, Howe, Charnock, and many of similar accomplishments ministered) is the truth. He left the "*House called Beautiful*," its beauty having, indeed, to his eyes, somewhat abated, for the conflict with Apollyon in the Valley of Humiliation. It was not that he became a hater of the elegant and artistic, but that he became aware of a severer elegance, a sterner art, a higher beauty, connected with Conflict, Liberty, and Truth, and felt that to stoop is often to conquer, and that there are eyes to which a descent like that from *Comus* to *Samson Agonistes* seems a step in Jacob's ladder *upwards*. His deepening zeal in politics and religion was faithfully paralleled by his advancement in genuine poetic power.

Before speaking farther of Milton's own genius, we have a few words to say about his critics. A motley collection, verily they are! Addison comes first, in that very long and loving analysis of the Poet's principal work, which, poor and artificial as it now seems, did good at the time, and served as a plain finger-post quietly pointing up to the stupendous sublimities of the subject. Its criticism is cramped, but its spirit is fine, and the extracts it gives are, in general, selected on the principle that they are characteristic, and can stand alone. Johnson's critique seems the short-hand outline of a whole volume of admiration and hatred, respect and scorn, the materials of which had been collecting in his breast for a lifetime, and in its sour concentration lies much of its power. Whole articles have been written, to answer some of its separate dicta, or abate the force of some of its single sneers! Most of those who have replied to it, have weakened their cause by towering into a passion, and calling the old Polyphemus harsh names. But mere foam, although able to cover up for a short time, is not able to quench and obliterate any colossal injustice. Sir Egerton Brydges, and Percival Stockdale, make violent but ineffectual attempts at reprisals. More ludicrous is the aspect of the Wartons, who wrote ere Johnson's critical authority was lessened, and who just dare to peep out of their holes, and to mutter words of Lilliputian protest against this enormity of the "Man Mountain." Todd, *et hoc*

omne genus, who were still more decidedly legitimists than the Wartons, are, between their love of Milton and their sympathy with Johnson's political faith, placed in even a more lamentable plight. Coleridge and Foster first—echoed afterwards by Channing and Macaulay—took the true method in their rejoinder to Johnson. They pled from his bar to a higher—they said, *Coram haud judice*. They proceeded not to depreciate Johnson, but to *distinguish* him from the subject of his criticism. They stated—especially Channing—the broad and deep differences between Johnson's strong, coarse mind, and the ethereal ardour, attitude, and habit of Milton, and asked the unanswerable question, How could two such minds sympathise; and might not, probably, Milton's criticism on Johnson have been as worthless as Johnson's on Milton? Of the Wartons, Todd, &c., otherwise, it were useless to speak at large. Joseph and Thomas Warton, men of limited depth, but of refined taste, appreciated the beautiful in Milton's soul rather than the sublime—theyself minor men, they wrote best about his minor poems. To Todd's devotion to him, we owe the admirable edition we have. Bishop Newton did "Tom's best," as Johnson would have said about him, although his criticism is often contemptible. The accomplished Sir Egerton Brydges came forth with chivalric zeal to encounter Johnson, and loud was the flourish of trumpets which announced his entrance on the lists, and sharp and clear the stroke of challenge he struck upon the Achillean shield; but whether from age, or weakness, or excess of desire to do what his power did not permit him to do, he reeled in the saddle, and dropped down helpless. With the best of causes, and the warmest enthusiasm for it, he is but a weak defender of Milton. Very different is our estimate of Channing's noble panegyric. Its great charm lies in the calm possession and command of an unanswerable argument; he knows the strength of his case too well to put himself to trouble and travail in maintaining it—he simply and clearly states it, and the statement is the proof. Channing's nature and creed, too, eminently fitted him to be the panegyrist of Milton. It is a Republican commending a Republican—a man of cultured classical taste, worshipping a Modern Greek—a

man of seraphic spirituality, glorifying a more exalted specimen of the same race—a man who combined high moral qualities with certain heterodox sentiments, illustrating the character of a still sublimer Heretic. Possessed of less moral sympathy with Milton, Macaulay brought to the subject a richer scholarship, a more brilliant diction, and the fervour of a heart then in the “dew of its youth,” and palpitating with an enthusiasm of which he seems now somewhat ashamed. Latterly, Landor, Emerson, De Quincey, Professor Wilson, David Masson, and others, have scattered pearls of praise, and supplied splendid fragments of criticism.

Perhaps three words will go farther than long elaborate definition and discussion in expressing the genius of Milton—and these are Wholeness, Sublimity, and Simplicity. How much lies in that plain strong word “Whole!” Completeness, harmony, health, and purity are all included in the term. Milton was not a bright fragment, with yawning edges and fluctuating lustre,—he was in a minor sense a “Whole One.” Gifted originally with all natural capacities,—the Reasoning and the Imaginative, the Creative and the Mechanical, the Mathematical and the Musical—he gave them the highest culture possible in his age; he sustained and inspirited their operations by the exercise and careful management of a fine bodily constitution; and he baptized them in the streams of Divine Truth and of Gospel Morality—in

“Siloa’s brook that flows
Hard by the oracle of God.”

The result was, not a giant or monster of mingled power and weakness, wisdom and folly, such as we find in a Julius Cæsar, a Mirabeau, a Voltaire, or a Napoleon, but a thoroughly furnished, and compactly-built man—with strength and symmetry equal to each other—with head and heart bound together by the band of worship,—truly what Cæsar was falsely called, “the foremost man in all this world,”—only, shall we say, “a little lower than the angels,” or than those surpassing mortals, who, in the days of the past, met with angels, or saw the Great I AM himself, and became their similitudes on earth, and their oracles to men. And what if this Whole

One did feel himself a stranger and pilgrim,—did look wistfully to the far-off heavens,—did wear supernal scorn at times upon his lip, and say, “I do well to be angry even unto death”?—it was the necessity of his nature, and one of the few things which proved him not to be divine.

This wholeness accounts for the multiformity and consecration of his genius. He is, contrary to common opinion, a many-sided man, as perhaps all men of the *loftiest* genius must be. His works include specimens of the epic, the drama, the pastoral, the ode, the elegy, the sonnet, the masque, the song, the epistle, the satire, the argument, the history, the theological treatise, the grammar, and the dictionary. His versatility and his vastness taken together, astonish you, and make you think of the “*mountains* leaping like lambs,” in the great scriptural figure. Shakspeare, Goethe, Scott, and others, in their manifold transformations, seem often to sink their idiosyncrasy,—when personating small fools or villains visible only through their villany, they can become small as they; when, in the exercise of their demoniac gift, they enter into swine, they sometimes become swine themselves, and this thorough identification with others is partly a power and partly a weakness and blemish. Another class of writers, such as Johnson, and even Wordsworth, may attempt to change their voice and shift their position, but in vain—their little fishes talk like whales,—their speech bewrayeth them,—they cannot but utter their sturdy Shibboleth, and their efforts to personate others are as abortive as they are clumsy and violent. Milton, on the other hand, may be in this point compared to his own Satan, who, even when transformed into a serpent in Eden, was a splendid one;—

——— “His head
Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes;
With burnish’d neck of verdant gold, erect
Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
Floated redundant: pleasing was his shape
And lovely;”—

who, when changed into a cherub, became—

“Such as in his face
Youth smil’d celestial, and to every limb
Suitable grace diffus’d;”—

and who, when in hell compelled to resume the serpent shape, it was—

“Still greatest *he* the midst,
Now dragon grown, larger than whom the sun
Engender'd in the Pythian vale.”

Like Atlas, wherever Milton is, the burden of the rolling heavens is on his shoulders.

The consecration of Milton's mind, too, sprang greatly from the large wholeness of his being. It is into fragmentary minds, especially into minds where there is some great deficiency, some gap as hopeless as it is wide,—into minds deficient, like Hume's, in imagination, or like Rousseau's, in common sense, or like Voltaire's, in reverence, or like Shelley's, in balance, that fiendish doubts as to the Divine origin and purpose of the universe are apt to insinuate themselves. Le Sage speaks of *one* Diable Boiteux, but in reality all the fiends are lame; and it is partly because they are so, that they are fiends. In proportion to the general power of a mind is ever its intense perception of any vital deficiency in itself; and this perception often leads, not to humility, but to that pride and discontent which are the soul of irreligion or Atheism. Those, on the other hand, who approach to entireness of intellect, present in their soul a rounded mirror calculated to reflect fully not only literature and nature, but that near, yet far off, ever present and never visible, One, who filleth immensity,—and such a soul was Milton's. Sometimes troubled but never turbid; sometimes shadowed, but never sullen; sometimes cold, but never frozen; sometimes heated, but never glaring—the broad lake of his genius faithfully gives back the awful countenance of his Father and God.

It is marvellous how thoroughly in Milton the “Consecration” and the “Poet's Dream” are attempered and reconciled. His dreams are always holy dreams, as though he were slumbering with his own angels in the vales of heaven, or at the foot of the

“Flaming Mount whose top
Brightness had made invisible.”

The revel of his fancy is always under severe restraint, and when his genius at times does dance, it is a measured and mystic dance, like that of the seraphim around the sacred hill.

His use of the Pagan Mythology has often been objected to him as inconsistent with his reverence for the true Belief and the Book of God. But he never introduces the heathen gods except as tributaries and captives. His Dagon falls down before Jehovah; he has preserved in his poetry as in a vast museum, not a temple, the images of the fallen deities with the word "idols" labelled on them,—objects not of belief or reverence, but of curiosity or poetic interest.

We have called him elsewhere a belated bard of the Bible. In austere loftiness, thick imagery, holy calm, holier fury, and magnitude of purpose, he bears them a striking resemblance. His *differentia*—apart from the peculiar inspiration which appertained to them—lies in greater unity and artistic consciousness. There is a cant in the criticism of this day about poetic unity, and certain critics have even gone the length of denying that one, however many poetic elements he possesses, can be an absolute poet, without this. That this is absurd, will appear when we remember—1st, that the poems which are really artistic wholes are very few—can, in fact, be counted on one's fingers; when we remember, 2dly, that many noble poems, such as Young's *Night Thoughts*, Thomson's *Seasons*, and Bailey's *Festus*, do not possess unity; and when, to clench this argument, we remember, 3dly, that the highest poetry confessedly ever poured from the deep heart of man—that, namely, of the Hebrews—is fragmentary. What unity is there in the Psalms, or in those other fiery lyrics which are sprinkled through the books of the Old Testament? What band, save the band of individual genius, binds together the glorious minstrelsies of Isaiah, the pathetic strains of Jeremiah, or the mystic dreams of Ezekiel? In Job, indeed, there are a story and a plot; but they are very simple—they display scarcely any art, and the poetic power of the poem is in the gorgeousness of its separate passages. But Milton has striven after unity, and is one of the very few poets who have attained it. And this certainly has added a solid monumental, if also a somewhat artificial, character to his works. The productions of the Bible bards are the "trees of God, full of sap, and planted by his hand," although scattered and single; those of Milton stand up like a cathedral of man's handiwork,

built *to*, not *by*, God, but forming a shapely and symmetrical whole.

Milton's sublimity has become proverbial. His natural element is the great. He may love the beautiful, but the sublime loves him. He walks at ease on heights "where angels bashful look," and descends, with equal calm and boldness, amidst depths into which other souls dare only timidly peer. How perfectly at home he is in that wondrous hell of his which he has cut out from Chaos, and wrapped in devouring fires; in Chaos itself, through whose wild and world-shaking uproar, "the womb of nature and perhaps her grave," the ship of his genius moves on in triumphant security; on Niphates mount, looking down on half the world, and up to that ardent angel standing in the sun; on the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north, beside the throne and chariot of the Apostate; or over the surge of the primeval deep, as the Spirit is moving its subsiding waters, and the Son is taking the golden compasses from God's eternal store,—or near the Brightness of the Father's glory, as He comes forth with whirlwind noise to chase his hapless enemies over the battlements of heaven! Never for a moment on the giddiest of these giddy heights, or in the sablest of these dark imaginative depths, does he reel, or blench, or tremble, display weakness, or indicate terror. Girt, sandalled, white robed, "in privilege of virtue," he becomes free of the universe, and is safe in hell as an angel of light would be,—can stand on the crystal battlements or in the heart of the sun, with the dignity of a "Watcher," and enter the heaven of heavens with the immunity of a "Holy One." The only instance in which he seems to fail, is in the conversations which he records between God and the Son,—but here he was hampered, not so much by the profundity of his reverence for both, as by the uncertainty of his views as to the relation they bore each other. He seems to have ceased being a Trinitarian, but had not fully become an Arian at the time he wrote *Paradise Lost*; and hence in those parts of the poem an awkwardness of manner—a stiffness of phraseology—a timidity of feeling—an eagerness to confine himself to the *ipsissima verba* of Scripture, and thus, while his dialogues of devils are most eloquent, varied, and

powerful, his dialogues of Deity are exceedingly prosaic and dull.

The sublime element which was in Milton, condensed most fully and culminated in the idea of Satan. As this is probably the grandest character in the whole world of Poetry, it is proper to analyse it at some little length. It seems Milton's intention to represent the "Progress" of a Pilgrim *from* the Celestial City to that of utter and deepening Destruction, and that he may effect this on a broader scale, he chooses a canvas of unearthly magnitude and identifies his Pilgrim with a fallen Angelic Nature. Like great sculptors, he must work out his thought on colossal materials. He means to give the history of Individual Will, perverted, and placed in deadly antagonism with General Will, that is, with the Will of God; and to this perverted Will he must link a form and person the loftiest and most potent of which the imagination can conceive, a person too, of the reality of whose existence the Bible had informed him. He finds this proud and terrible shape in Satan, the archangel, who, according to Holy Writ, had fallen from heaven, nor had fallen alone, but had carried the third part of its "Stars" along with him. Having accepted the hint and outline from Scripture, he proceeds in accordance with his own idea to fill it up. On Satan he lavishes every power but omnipotence and every gift but goodness. He has might that could wield the elements; fury, that could tear them in sunder; wisdom only less than divine, and the deficiency in which seems supplied by a subtle and far-reaching craft; courage that yields only to fall back into the arms of resolute despair; pride and ambition pointing upwards to the throne of the universe as their goal and prize; fidelity to his followers, and capacity of enduring personal suffering, equalled only by hatred to all that oppose his path, by regret for happiness gone from him, and by savage envy at the happiness enjoyed by others; remorse and revenge, haughtiness and horror, fearlessness and anguished prospect struggling in one tempestuous yet determined breast. This mighty moral anomaly, Milton incarnates in a figure reflecting at once its powers and its mis-proportions, wearing on his brow a celestial crown blasted, and a reflection of heaven's glory obscured, with eyes like sun-smitten tarns, the chiaroscuro

of which hell's flames are not able to dim, but which "blaze and sparkle" above the billows of the lake of fire; an Atlantean stature, measured by "roods" of hell, as it had been originally by reaches and altitudes of glory; a brow trenched with thunder; a cheek "faded" like a cloud on which the day has ceased to shine; a body naked, save when flames are its clothing, or when shield and sword seem to spring up around; and a mien, lofty, lonely, contemptuous, and defiant, fitting the Titanic spear which guides his uneasy but unshrinking steps over the burning marle, and the words which, like mutterings of thunder, or the fierce groans of earthquake, come forth from his mouth—

"Evil, be thou my Good!"

"What matter WHERE, if *I* be still the same?"

Such is Satan, as Milton shews him in the opening of his Poem. But such he had not always been, nor was always to remain. He had been once a pure and exalted Being, next to the Father and the Son themselves, till in an evil hour he allowed ambition to mount what seemed only the single step between him and absolute Dominion—as there seems but a single step between the summit of the mountain and the Sun—to enter his soul. Then his real fall commenced; for in the train of ambition came pride, hatred, envy, rebellion, and such carnal passion as spirits can feel, and his expulsion from Heaven was only the inevitable consequence of his sin. In Pandemonium his virtue is lost, his power is limited, his glory is shaded, but his courage, magnanimity, and daring are increased. He is lashed by the flames into fiercer rage, and his unequalled and unenvied possession of the burning Throne of Hell inflates his pride. He determines on a last great effort to regain at least a portion of his original power—if inferior to the task of dethroning God, he shall yet try to blast one of God's favourite works. But from the moment that he determines to seek to involve an unknown and unwitting race of beings in his own ruin, a new shade of darkness falls upon his character, and from the Foe of God and the rebel chief of Angels he sinks into the Tempter of Man. He drops, as it were, the weapons of Heaven he had turned against their giver; he will not even use the black fire and infernal thunder suggested by Moloch, but adopts, instead,

the smaller and subtler engines of craft: for, although he has his armour with him on his journey, it is for defence, not assault; and although his progress through Chaos is sublime, the end which he seeks is mean, and begins to mar that dignity of despair which forsook him not, even when prostrate on the burning lake. He is now the Tempter in embryo, but ere he becomes the Tempter in act, his better nature must re-assert itself in the form of remorse upon the top of Niphates Mount. There the sight of the Sun, once his footstool, sends a flood of agony over his soul, and even one small whisper of hope, through penitence, crosses his mind, but no! it is too late:—the earth, his prey, is in sight, he must fulfil his destiny, and, as he wheels down from Niphates to Eden, you feel that a lower deep has opened on his lowest—that he has become irretrievably the Tempter and the Devil. Evil is now his Good. His damnation has darkened into a deeper hue, a hue indeed so deep that it can only be increased by success, and that success begins speedily to be his. Often afterwards does he seek to rally against his down-bearing doom,—once at the sight of the blissful pair in Eden; again, more proudly and characteristically, when he starts up in his own shape of defiance from the ear of Eve; and again, on the very verge of the Fall of Man. But it is vain; the current sweeps him on to a mean triumph, and to that mighty degradation which follows it, and comes to a climax (so far as the *Paradise Lost* is concerned) in the “dismal universal hiss” he meets when he returns to the throne of Hell.

In *Paradise Regained* we see the Pilgrimage still going on. The Fiend has indeed been permitted to evade Hell and to become the “Prince of the Power of the Air.” But long ages of successful wickedness have deepened his misery and his meanness. Hence he does not boldly confront Jesus, but keeps nibbling at his heels, and you see him sunk from the Lost Archangel

“Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms”
into a crafty and a baffled juggler. Once, indeed, he seeks to re-assert his former character, in that remarkable speech beginning,

“’Tis true I *am* that Spirit unfortunate,”

which De Quincey somewhere commemorates as one of the most eloquent specimens of rhetoric in literature. But his general conduct serves to prove that Sin, though it gives at first a dreadful glory to a great nature, ultimately degrades it, and becomes not only a bad but a low and ludicrous thing. Indeed, his fall from the pinnacle of the Temple seems designed to caricature his fall from the battlements of Heaven, and to intimate the Poet's view, that he could fall no farther, and that it is not worth while recording or imagining his future career.

We quote, from an able writer, some remarks on Satan which are less known than they deserve. "The ruined angel's appearance is a new and tremendous vision under the Sun. Dilated in its dimensions into something more fine and subtle than any known materialism, and coloured with hues and shades softer than blood ever blushed or twilight gave, it is yet condensed and solid with adamantine texture and strength, 'like Teneriffe or Atlas unremoved,' the grand pillar of his own empire. The outlines of the form, with all their vagueness, have nothing shadowy, but are compact and massy with indwelling energy. The face and form attract outwards upon and around them, in vivid display, all the inner feelings and purposes, and the hardened and sublime character of the wicked principality. Courage, hatred, remorse, and despair, have a strange effluence of dark and tumultuous glory from the 'unblest feet' up to the 'fulgent head;' the lustre of holiness has for ever gone, and with it the smiles of joy; still he is of regal port and faded splendour wan. His immortal nature and original rank have an expression which glows and glimmers through the darkness of guilt and misery; thrust down from heaven to the lowest deep for wickedness, his greatness has yet a stature which reaches the sky. Milton exhausts all the titles of rank and royalty in exalting his Hero. He is the 'Archangel,' the 'Superiour Fiend,' the 'General,' the 'Mighty Paramount,' 'Hell's King,' the 'Emperor,' the 'Sultan.' His superiority is cheerfully admitted by the very Spirits who had resisted the claims of the Supreme. He is precipitated in common ruin with his followers in the fiery gulph, yet there for nine days he lies apart in misery, as if none might share his pillow, throb in the fellowship of his

anguish, or repeat his groans. Beelzebub, the next in rank, is nearest to him, yet the same distance honours the couch of his chief, as ever honoured the glorious throne. Satan is the first to awake, as the light strikes on the mountain ere it reaches the plain.—That face which rises highest in defiance, and lowers most darkly in hatred of God, and quivers in most intense pain under the shadow of deepest despair, MUST be the infernal idol !”

We mentioned simplicity as the third grand characteristic of Milton's genius. His is not, however, in general, a bare, but a rich simplicity ; not the nakedness of desolation and poverty, but the sublime nakedness of unfallen Adam. In his earlier poems we find something which resembles exuberance of fancy—a play of imagery—a fine, light, aerial movement, as of a young cherub, with flushed cheek, restless eye, and fluttering pinions. But as his genius advances, this is gradually lost, and he grows and calms into a “Giant Angel,” wearing a beauty grave and terrible as his strength—his vast wings, like sunny clouds, slowly passing through the noon ; resting, when he rests, like a Pyramid, and moving, when he moves, like a Planet. Some have talked of the baldness of his later style, but these persons might as soon speak of dressing the Sphynx, as of improving on that austere and bold simplicity. His genius, as a whole, including its juvenile and elderly efforts, may be described in Moore's words on Lebanon :—

“ Whose head in wintry grandeur towers,
And whitens with eternal sleet ;
While summer, in a vale of flowers,
Is smiling rosy at his feet.”

While the young will continue to prefer *Comus*, the more matured will prefer the statelier and sterner heights of *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes*.

Subordinate to those main elements, we find many others, from which we select one or two. His dramatic power has been greatly underrated. It seems to us only inferior to Shakspeare's. He has divided the general angel or fiend element into a variety of finely individualised forms, and he has adapted the language to the character of each. He has done

this in spite of the somewhat unwieldy nature of his style. Byron has often been accused of masking himself under all his ideal characters—so that Childe Harold is Byron musing; Lara, Byron murdering; Manfred, Byron writhing in remorse; Cain, Byron speculating; and Don Juan, Byron pursuing love adventures. But no such charge can be brought against Milton. He can be identified neither with Michael nor with Satan; neither with Raphael nor Belial; neither with Gabriel nor Moloch. Nor can any of these be confounded with one another. Michael, Raphael, Gabriel, Abdiel, Uriel, are all holy, happy, powerful, and brave; but how different!—Michael is the strong Angel; Raphael, the eloquent; Gabriel, the wise; Abdiel, the faithful; and Uriel, the watchful. Satan, Moloch, Belial, Mammon, Beelzebub, are all fallen, eloquent, bold, all in torment, hate, and hell; but distinct as are columns of different architectures. Satan is the Infernal Egotist: the pronoun “I” begins every sentence of peculiar pride, and the favourite exclamation of his anguish is “*Ah me!*” Moloch is rash and desperate, and his fury vents itself in rugged laconics, in gasps and howls of hatred. Belial is the subtle, far revolving fiend, and his eloquence is fluent and sweet—a stream of sugared poison. Mammon is the down-looking Demon, and his words, like his thoughts, seek the centre. Beelzebub’s speeches, like his character, are calm, measured—his talk is just thinking made audible, and has, withal, a cast of grave, terrific irony, which he fears not to apply to his fellow-fiends, when he says—

“Thrones, and imperial powers, offspring of Heaven,
Ethereal virtues! Or these titles now
Must we renounce, and, changing style, be called
Princes of Hell?”

And again—

“Advise, if this be worth
Attempting; or to sit in darkness here,
Hatching vain empires.”

We counsel the man who would be an orator, to read, not Demosthenes, Fox, Burke, Grattan, and Webster, but to give his days and his nights to the speeches of the Halls of Pandemonium. Milton, it is believed by many, began the

Paradise Lost in a dramatic form; had he completed it as a Drama, it had become a Tragedy surpassing any single play in Eschylus or Shakspeare—it would have necessarily avoided the prose and platitudes which are found in the present Epic—it would have combined the rugged force of the *Agonistes* with a far richer, more imaginative, and passionate treatment, and would have stood more conspicuously and colossally alone among the Dramas, than it does now among the Epics of the World. There are many still who mate the *Iliad* and the *Divina Commedia* with the *Paradise Lost*; but there would, we think, have been none to compare the *Prometheus Vincetus*, or the *Macbeth*, to the “Fall of Man,” by Milton, had he executed his purpose as he could have done. We do not mean to say, that his native genius was superior or equal to that of Shakspeare and Eschylus, but merely that his blended art, genius, learning, and religion, would have constructed a greater separate dramatic structure than any they have left—a Drama combining the severity and the loftiness of the old Grecian model, with much of the subtlety, variety, and brilliance of the Shakspearean Play.

The manner in which Milton sublimates his learning has often been noticed by his critics. It is more wonderful than his learning itself. And yet that is worthy of all the encomiums which have been passed on it. It comes out, not only in those apparently elaborate, though in reality spontaneous and irresistible, accumulations of names and historic facts, which are found scattered through all his poems, but in the far-flashing allusions which everywhere abound. His style not only ever and anon sparkles with, but is steeped in, the most profound and recondite learning of his times. Buchanan has given the preference to learned Poets, in the lines—

“Sola doctorum monumenta vatûm
Nesciunt Fati imperium severi;
Sola contemnunt Phlegethonta, et Orci
Jura superbi.”

Here he errs in the word “sola,” but certainly, in the case of Milton and a few others, Poetry has found a graceful handmaid in Learning. Names, incidents, countries, characters,

which had been deemed barren, and left to rust on the upper or lower shelves of libraries, are summoned, by this mighty Poet, to his aid, and they cannot but come, and come, too, in dance and music. His catalogue of the Devils, his geographical excursions, his mythological fables, are among the most interesting and poetical parts of his poem. We are astonished to find Hallam objecting to them, in company with others who have stated, but can scarcely have felt, their faultiness. To those possessed of historical lore, these names, as Macaulay remarks, are charmed names—to others they are like a foreign language spoken by Gavazzi, or sung by Jenny Lind—their music affects them almost as deeply as their meaning could. If jargon, they are at least the potent jargon of a magician opening doors in rocks, rooting up pines, and making palaces and mountains come and go at his pleasure. And it is remarkable that this power—a power springing from a profound knowledge of the associations which words can awaken, and of the exquisite harmony which certain combinations of them can produce—a power first displayed by Homer, and which, in Milton, came to a climax—seems to have now vanished from literature. The only good specimens of it, since Milton, we remember, are in Thomson's picture of the Torrid Zone, and in the last chapter of Thomas Aird's *Religious Characteristics*. Even Pollok, in his description of the nations which embrace the Gospel at the Millennium, fails in this Ideal Geography. He selects the names at haphazard, and does not seem to have weighed them in the trembling scales of an ear at once musical and poetic, ere committing them to his page.

Much that is true, and much that is false—much sense, and much nonsense—has been written about the faults of Milton. His puns, bulls, conceits, and quibbles, we surrender at once to his severer critics. They are not very numerous, and only a vulture nostril, like that of Warburton, can smell in them a sweet savour, and delight in such a petty sacrifice. A good deal of lumbering prose there is, unquestionably, in all his later works, but it serves to relieve and balance his nobler passages, and ever and anon, amid the dull level, a fine line occurs, proving that the author is a “god of the plain” as well as of the “mountain,” and that his flatness is not

that of weakness, but of recumbent strength. He has been charged, by Johnson, with using a "Babylonish dialect," but the Doctor had forgot his own style, and his own adage, "Big thinkers require big words." Milton was a big and a learned thinker, and he required large and learned words. Even his astronomy and cosmogony, which were those of his age, have been made matter of accusation against him, as if a poet in any age were bound by the laws of strict scientific truth any more than by those of general experience,—as if he might not, if he chose, find his astronomy in astrology, his cosmogony in the reveries of the Brahmins, and his chemistry in the dreams of the alchymists—and as if there were not a magnificent poetry, deducible, and by Dante and Milton actually deduced, from the Ptolemaic system of the universe. With greater force he has been accused of harsh inversions, ellipses, and frequent obscurity; but his darkness, we must remember, is never deliberate, and seldom very dense; he never, like many in modern days, sets himself on purpose "to darken counsel by words without knowledge;" and while the edges of his thought sometimes dip into clouds, the centre is always as the "body of heaven in its clearness." The question as to who is the hero of the *Paradise Lost*, has elicited much controversy, and led to divers unfounded charges against its author. Adam, Satan, and the Messiah have their respective partisans. It is a question of little consequence. Yet let us look at it for a moment. If a hero mean the most interesting and impressive character in an Epos, then Dryden is right, and Satan is the hero. If a hero mean the being you most sympathise with, then Adam is the hero. If a hero mean the personage who turns the tide of the plot, and gathers the greatest glory around him from the issue, then the Messiah is the hero. So that, while thus there are three candidates in Milton for the honour, in Homer there are only two, namely, Hector the most interesting character in the *Iliad*, and with whom, too, you most warmly sympathise; and Achilles, the most powerful, and whose avatar is attended with the most triumphant results. We do not attempt to decide the question, except by saying that, in our notion, technically Messiah is the hero—really Satan. Messiah has

the *most success*,—Satan impresses most deeply. Yet we are far from agreeing with the following extraordinary statement of Hallam's:—"The first two books confirm the sneer of Dryden, that Satan is Milton's hero, since they develop a plan of action which is ultimately successful; the triumph which he and his host must experience in the fall of man being hardly compensated by their temporary conversion into serpents." As if *that* were the only compensation; as if the tenor of the whole argument were not to shew that the second Adam was to bruise the serpent's head by recovering the majority of the race from Satan's grasp, and by at last consuming Satan and his perverted world! The object of Satan was not only to ruin man, but to rob God of glory; and one purpose of the poet is to shew how neither part of the plan was successful, but that it all redounded to the devil's misery and disgrace, and to the triumph of God and of the Messiah. With a like carelessness does this critic add—"Except one circumstance which seems rather physical intoxication than anything else, we do not find any sign of depravity superinduced upon the transgression of our first parents." Has Mr Hallam forgotten that fine and most Shakspearean scene of their mutual recrimination, and of the gross injustice Adam does to Eve by calling her that "bad woman," that "serpent," &c.? Was there no sign of depravity there? And was even "physical intoxication" possible to undepraved beings? We refer our readers to Macaulay, Channing, and others, for a defence of our poet against other charges, such as the confusion he is said to make between matter and spirit in his angels—his digressions—his episode of Sin and Death, and many more, all of which are more or less founded on truth, but which have been all more or less exaggerated.

We pass to a rapid review of his poetic works, beginning in an inverted climax with his largest, and descending to his less. We think that *Paradise Lost* may be analysed into the following elements—the sublime, the beautiful, the pathetic, the didactic, the picturesque, the grotesque, and the prosaic. This, if not a thoroughly exhaustive division, will serve to open up its principal features.

The Sublime of this poem is chiefly found in the 1st, and

partly in the 2d, and in the 5th, 6th, and 7th books. Of these the 1st book is unquestionably the loftiest not only in this poem but in poetry. It is the highest mountain in all Milton's Himalayan range. It soars easily, proudly, consciously, "above all Greek, all Roman fame." We find in it—and it is the only book of this or any poem where we do—the element of sublimity existing undiluted and alone. Not a page, not a line, not a word detracts from the general sense of the vast, the gloomy, the terrible, the distant, the solitary, and the infinite. Satan—the scene around—his followers and their actions, combine to form a whole inexpressibly and overwhelmingly grand. In the 2d book sublimity clings principally to the character of Satan, and is mixed up with the elements of the dramatic and the grotesque. In the 3d and 4th books, it is still more strictly confined to that tremendous Apparition, who has left hell, cleft chaos, and is hovering, like an eclipse, between earth and heaven. In the 5th book, this Apparition for a season fades away, and you see sublimity in its native seat—Heaven now described as preparing for war. In the 6th book, the principal grandeur is at first attached to Abdiel returning through night, dreadless and unpursued; it then lights on the crest of Satan, and at last sits down beside "victory eagle-winged," above the chariot of the Son. That description is certainly the sublimest single passage in the poem. It is copied partly indeed from Hesiod's *War of the Giants*, but is superior to it, or even to Achilles coming forth against the Trojans. As the Messiah in his progress snatched up his fallen foes, and drove them before him like leaves on the blast, Milton, in the whirlwind of his inspiration, snatches up words, allusions, images from Homer, Hesiod, and the Word of God, and bears them in triumph and in terror on—and as soon call a tornado a plagiarist of the forests it tears up in the fury of its power, as the poet. Much has been said of Milton's plagiarism, and the notes to many editions of his poem are disgraced by attempts to trace, often on the weakest evidence, almost all his fine things to others. Milton, however, was too rich to require to steal,—and although he often imitates, he always improves, and never commits base and palpable theft. If, indeed, to follow faithfully in one's own

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way a signal given by another,—to finish in an unexpected and independent style the torso of another artist,—to deliver, by a masterly stroke, the Minerva struggling in the brain of another god,—to light a torch fairly and openly at the sun,—to change a mass of dead fuel into quick flame,—to snatch in the keen and desperate *melée* an axe from the next yeoman, and deal blows therewith,—to draw from other wells with a golden pitcher which shall hallow and beautify whatever it brings up;—if this be a thief, then let us call Milton one, nay, the prince—the god—the Mercury of thieves. And nowhere do we find this divine theft more conspicuous than in the 7th book, where he fills up the colossal skeleton of the Scripture history of the creation as only a man of kindred genius and power to Moses could have done.

Of the Beautiful, we find little in the *Paradise Lost* till we reach the 4th book. But there the author of *Lycidas* and *Comus* exerts all his powers to lavish a tropical wealth of loveliness on our First Parents and their happy dwelling. Paradise is no nook of beauty: it is a large place, with mountains, and forests, and rivers, as well as flowers, and streams, and vales in it. But the bower in the midst is its centre, and sheds a softness and rosy lustre over the whole. Our First Parents, too, are more distinguished by their symmetry and beauty, than by their majesty and power. Beautiful beyond desire; simple beyond disguise; graceful without consciousness; naked without shame; innocent, but not insipid; dignified, but not proud;—they are, at the same time, frail as tenderest plants, and must, like them, be constantly guarded; you from the first tremble for them, and objects or beings for whom you tremble cannot be sublime. Nor do we think that either Uriel or Raphael, as persons, overpass the limit of the Beautiful—although nothing can be grander than the position of the former, in the Sun—or more magnificent than the discourse of the other.

The Pathos of the Poem is chiefly found in some of Satan's softer soliloquies and in the lamentations of the hapless pair after their fall. It is calmer and less subtle than the pathos of Shakspeare, and we are not sure if any one scene equals that of Hector and Andromache in Homer; but it is extremely

eloquent and mellifluous. The reconciliation between Adam and Eve is generally thought a copy of that between Milton and his first wife.

The Didactic exists as an under-current through the greater part of the poem, but is found especially in the 3d and in the 8th books. Milton, sooth to say, is not a very good didactic poet. He is better at creating gigantic or graceful figures, than at expounding abstract truths. Had he given us a system of Theology in verse—an Essay on God—it had been altogether illegible.

The Picturesque is very abundant. How strikingly it is displayed in the description of Beelzebub “rising like a pillar of state ;” in that of Raphael descending in his “downy gold ” and “feathered mail ;” in that of the Serpent with his

“Circular base of rising folds, that tower’d,
Fold above fold, a surging maze ;”

in that of the lion at his creation, “pawing to free his hinder parts ;” and in the gallery of pictures shewn to Adam by Michael from the highest hill in Paradise ! Milton has been charged with being rather a musical than a picturesque Poet—but the passages we have alluded to, and many more, confute the charge. Indeed, his blindness was certain to increase the outstanding distinctness and clearness of his imagery, as well as his sense of harmonious sound.

The Grotesque he has too frequently interwoven with the Grand. Under this head we rank the Limbo of vanity—the speeches of the fallen angels on the second day of the war in Heaven—perhaps also the transformation of Satan and his crew into Serpents—and certainly the “Sin and Death.” Yet, although too Dantesque or even Ariosto-like in its taste, the Allegory of Sin and Death abounds in most powerful poetry. It is a very rape of genius, but the progeny is glorious. For eloquence, interest, terrific suspense, there is nothing in the whole poem finer than the interview between Satan and his ghastly Son. This Allegory, however, must bear the blame of by far the coarsest and worst lines in the poem. They are these, put in the mouth of God, as he sees Sin and Death advancing upon the Earth :—

“I call'd and drew them thither,
 My Hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth
 Which Man's polluting Sin with taint hath shed
 On what was pure, till crammed and gorged, nigh burst
 With suck'd and glutted offal, at one sling
 Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,” &c.

We think that to the same category of grotesqueness must belong the scene between Satan and the Anarchs of Chaos, although here, too, the apparent absurdity is redeemed by the splendour of the poetry. Who but Milton could have written these words?—

“Chaos and his dark pavilion spread
 Wide on the wasteful deep ; with him enthroned
 Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of kings
 The consort of his reign ; and by them stood
 Orcus and Ades, and the *dreaded Name*
Of Demogorgon ; Rumour next and chance
 And Tumult and Confusion all embroil'd,
 And Discord with a thousand various mouths.”

We name, finally, the Prosaic, as constituting no small portion of his poem. To this we have alluded a little before. It is found not at all in the first and second books ; we meet with it first in the third ; in the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh, it is almost entirely wanting ; while the eighth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth abound with it—indeed it becomes much more frequent and more leaden after the Fall, when the purpose of the Poet seems nearly accomplished, and the flush of his original fervour has faded away. These are the leading constituents of his great poem. But there are, besides, certain passages, having a personal reference, and a very profound interest ;—for example, his address to Light, at the opening of the third book, is one of the divinest instincts in Poetry. How appropriate the position it occupies ! Milton had filled his imagination with Hell and Chaos—he had almost identified himself with the dread Pilgrim who had made his way out of Hell's midnight into the regions of Day—and hence at the sight of the first sunbeam he cannot but utter a cry of welcome as fervid and loud as if HE had newly escaped from the outer darkness. So far from being, as it has been called, a splendid excrescence, the passage springs up natur-

ally in its place, and testifies to the thorough reality of the Poet's inspiration. Of its sublimity and yearning pathos, it is superfluous to speak.

Paradise Regained, could it have possibly been introduced into the *Paradise Lost* as an Episodical Vision, would have been thought not inferior in power to any other part of the poem, except the first two books; and in exquisite simplicity and gentle dignity, equal to anything in it all. But the title suggested a large plan, which the poem did not realise. Its name was ambitious, itself was short and unpretending, and it seemed to come to an abrupt and unartistic close. It avoided the grand subjects of Christ's Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and Second Advent, any or all of which the title was broad enough to have included. It should have been called Christ's Temptation, a Poem. It was not, in short, a proper pendant to the *Paradise Lost*. The one was the huge Orion or Great Bear, covering a half of the heavens; the other, the small tear-twinkling Pleiades. Hence it was a disappointment at first, and has never since received its due meed of praise. And yet, if comparatively a fragment, what a true, shapely, beautiful, fragment it is! Its power so quiet, its elegance so unconscious, its costume of language so Grecian, its general tone so scripturally simple, while its occasional speeches and descriptions are so gorgeous, and so faultless! The views from the Mountain, the storm in the Wilderness, the dreams of Christ when he was an hungered, so exquisitely true to his waking character—

“ Him thought, he by the brook of Cherith stood,
And saw the ravens, with their horny beaks,
Food to Elijah bringing even and morn,
Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought :
He saw the Prophet also, how he fled
Into the desert, and how there he slept
Under a juniper ; then how awak'd,
And found his supper on the coals prepar'd,
Sometimes that with Elijah he partook,
Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse”—

are in the Poet's very highest style, and one or two of them, indeed, have a gloss of perfection about them, as well as an ease and freedom of touch rarely to be found in his larger

poem. In the *Paradise Lost*, he is a giant tossing mountains to heaven with far seen struggle, and in evident trial of strength. In the *Paradise Regained*, he is a giant gently putting his foot on a rock, and leaving a mark inimitable, indelible, visible to all after time.

His *Samson Agonistes*, too, accomplishes great effects by a very small apparent expenditure of means. Even as the Hero has his limbs fettered, has Milton cramped himself with the Aristotelian unities. Samson, however, says—

“ My heels are fettered, but my fist is free.”

And so Milton's genius asserts itself in spite of the unities. If shaven of his giant locks, they have yet, like the Danite's, begun to grow. There is no luxuriance in this poem; it is throughout severe, sculptural, and stands up before you like a statue, bloodless and blind. A deep gloom hangs over its story, and the peevishness of its Hero is only compensated by his power. Samson is Milton in a hard Hebrew form. The fair vesture of youth and hope is for ever gone from his limbs, the hair of his head is shorn, he is clad in “filthy garments,” forsaken, blind, carelessly diffused; but his courage, pride, patriotism, and devotion, are still extant, and ready to reassert themselves once more to avenge the loss of his two eyes. His hand has few flowers in it, it strains rather at the pillars, and uses them as the instruments of its terrible concentrated force. His spirit is that of Abimelech, when he cried to his armour-bearer, “Say not a woman slew me.” Samson must die, with a city of enemies dragged down to death above him, and give to suicide for once a patriotic dignity and a sacramental consecration. The scenes with Delilah and Harapah are amazingly spirited and dramatic, although coarser in style than Milton's wont. The choruses rise sometimes to Grecian grandeur of lyric thought, and sink more frequently into Grecian intricacy of measure. Altogether, you believe with trembling in the power of this poem. It is no Hymettus humming with bees, and blushing with flowers; it is a Sinai, bared in the wrath of Heaven, hanging over your head, and threatening to crush wonder out of you rather than to awaken warm and willing admiration.

Time would fail us to speak, as they deserve, of *Comus*, that finest compound of the pastoral and the play, with its high moralisings and Shakspearean imagery; of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, with their delicious contrast and dancing measures; of the Hymn on *Christ's Nativity*, which, slow and solemn as a charmed river, moves around the awful sanctities of its theme; of *Lycidas*, wailing so melodiously over

“ That fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,
Which laid so low that sacred head of thine ;”

of the Sonnets, rising in climax, from the rugged simplicity of those of *Cyriack Skinner*, up to the grand swelling peal (as of a Sonnet soaring out of itself into some higher form of verse) of that *On the late Massacre in Piemont*; or of his graceful Greek, Italian, and Latin verses and versicles. We have not said enough to exhaust our own admiration, but we have pointed again—with however feeble a finger—to fountains of song which no impurity defiles, and which are as fresh and full this hour as when they were first opened by the hand of the Master-spirit.

“ Blessings be with him, and eternal praise !”

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PARADISE LOST.

THE VERSE.

THE measure is English heroic verse without rhyme, as that of Homer in Greek, and of Virgil in Latin; rhyme being no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially, but the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter and lame metre; graced, indeed, since by the use of some famous modern poets, carried away by custom, but much to their own vexation, hindrance, and constraint to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse, than else they would have expressed them. Not without cause, therefore, some both Italian and Spanish poets of prime note have rejected rhyme both in longer and shorter works, as have also long since our best English tragedies, as a thing of itself, to all judicious ears, trivial, and of no true musical delight; which consists only in apt numbers, fit quantity of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another, not in the jingling sound of like endings, a fault avoided by the learned ancients both in poetry and all good oratory. This neglect, then, of rhyme so little is to be taken for a defect, though it may seem so perhaps to vulgar readers, that it is rather to be esteemed an example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poem, from the troublesome and modern bondage of rhyming.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

The First Book proposes, first in brief, the whole subject—Man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise, wherein he was placed: then touches the prime cause of his fall, the serpent, or rather Satan in the serpent; who, revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of angels, was, by the command of God, driven out of heaven, with all his crew, into the great deep. Which action passed over, the poem hastens into the midst of things, presenting Satan, with his angels, now fallen into hell, described here, not in the centre (for heaven and earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed), but in a place of utter darkness, fitliest called Chaos: here Satan, with his angels, lying on the burning lake, thunderstruck and astonished, after a certain space recovers as from confusion, calls up him who next in order and dignity lay by him: they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded. They rise; their numbers; array of battle; their chief leaders named, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech, comforts them with hope yet of regaining heaven, but tells them lastly of a new world, and a new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy or report in heaven; for, that angels were long before this visible creation, was the opinion of many ancient fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereon, he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandemonium, the palace of Satan, rises suddenly, built out of the deep: the infernal peers there sit in council.

OF Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, heavenly Muse, that, on the secret top

Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
 That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,
 In the beginning, how the Heavens and Earth
 Rose out of Chaos : Or, if Sion hill
 Delight thee more, and Siloa's¹ brook that flow'd
 Fast by the oracle of God ; I thence
 Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
 That with no middle flight intends to soar
 Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
 Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.

And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
 Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
 Instruct me, for Thou know'st ; Thou from the first
 Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread 20
 Dove-like, sat'st brooding on the vast abyss,
 And mad'st it pregnant : What in me is dark,
 Illumine ; what is low, raise and support ;
 That to the highth of this great argument
 I may assert Eternal Providence,
 And justify the ways of God to men.

Say first, for Heaven hides nothing from thy view,
 Nor the deep tract of Hell ; say first, what cause
 Moved our grand Parents, in that happy state,
 Favour'd of Heaven so highly, to fall off 30
 From their Creator, and transgress his will
 For one restraint, lords of the world besides ?
 Who first seduced them to that foul revolt ?
 The infernal Serpent ; he it was, whose guile,
 Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceiv'd
 The mother of mankind, what time his pride
 Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his host
 Of rebel Angels ; by whose aid aspiring
 To set himself in glory above his peers,

¹ ' Siloa : ' a small brook flowing near the Temple of Jerusalem.

He trusted to have equall'd the Most High, 40
If he oppos'd ; and, with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God,
Rais'd impious war in Heaven, and battle proud,
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
Hurl'd headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition ; there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night 50
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded, though immortal : But his doom
Reserv'd him to more wrath ; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness, and lasting pain,
Torments him : round he throws his baleful eyes,
That witness'd huge affliction and dismay
Mix'd with obdurate pride and steadfast hate :
At once, as far as Angels ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild : 60
A dungeon horrible on all sides round,
As one great furnace flam'd ; yet from those flames
No light ; but rather darkness visible
Serv'd only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell ; hope never comes,
That comes to all ; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd :
Such place Eternal Justice had prepar'd 70
For those rebellious ; here their prison ordain'd
In utter darkness, and their portion set
As far remov'd from God and light of Heaven,

As from the center thrice to the utmost pole. 74
O how unlike the place from whence they fell !
There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns ; and weltering by his side
One next himself in power, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and named
Beëlzebub.¹ To whom the Arch-Enemy,
And thence in Heaven called Satan, with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence, thus began :

If thou beest he ; but O, how fallen ! how chang'd
From him, who, in the happy realms of light,
Cloth'd with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
Myriads though bright ! If he, whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd 90
In equal ruin ! Into what pit thou seest,
From what highth fallen ; so much the stronger prov'd
He with his thunder : and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms ? Yet not for those,
Nor what the potent Victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
Though chang'd in outward lustre, that fix'd mind,
And high disdain, from sense of injur'd merit,
That with the Mightiest rais'd me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along 100
Innumerable force of Spirits arm'd,
That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,
His utmost power with adverse power oppos'd
In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,
And shook his throne. What though the field be lost ?
All is not lost ; the unconquerable will,

¹ ' Beëlzebub : ' see 2 Kings i. 2.

And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield,
And, what is else, not to be overcome ;
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his power,
Who, from the terrour of this arm so late
Doubted his empire ; that were low indeed,
That were an ignominy, and shame beneath
This downfall ; since, by fate, the strength of gods
And this empyreal substance cannot fail ;
Since, through experience of this great event
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanc'd,
We may with more successful hope resolve
To wage, by force or guile, eternal war,
Irreconcilable to our grand Foe,
Who now triumphs, and, in th' excess of joy
Sole reigning, holds the tyranny of heaven.

So spake the apostate Angel, though in pain,
Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep despair :
And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer.

O Prince ! O Chief of many throned Powers,
That led the embattled Seraphim to war
Under thy conduct, and, in dreadful deeds
Fearless, endanger'd Heaven's perpetual King,
And put to proof his high supremacy,
Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate ;
Too well I see and rue the dire event,
That with sad overthrow, and foul defeat,
Hath lost us Heaven, and all this mighty host
In horrible destruction laid thus low,
As far as gods and heavenly essences
Can perish ; for the mind and spirit remains
Invincible, and vigour soon returns,

Though all our glory extinct, and happy state 141
Here swallow'd up in endless misery.
But what if He our Conquerour (whom I now
Of force believe Almighty, since no less
Than such could have o'erpower'd such force as ours)
Have left us this our spirit and strength entire
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service, as his thralls
By right of war, whate'er his business be, 150
Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,
Or do his errands in the gloomy deep ;
What can it then avail, though yet we feel
Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being
To undergo eternal punishment ?

Whereto with speedy words the Arch-Fiend replied.

Fallen Cherub ! to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,
To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight, 160
As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil ;
Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.
But see ! the angry Victor hath recall'd
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit 170
Back to the gates of Heaven: the sulphurous hail,
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown, hath laid
The fiery surge, that from the precipice
Of Heaven receiv'd us falling ; and the thunder,

Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage, 175
 Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
 To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
 Let us not slip the occasion, whether scorn,
 Or satiate fury, yield it from our Foe.
 Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild, 180
 The seat of Desolation, void of light,
 Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
 Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
 From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
 There rest, if any rest can harbour there;
 And, reassembling our afflicted Powers,
 Consult how we may henceforth most offend
 Our Enemy; our own loss how repair;
 How overcome this dire calamity;
 What re-enforcement we may gain from hope; 190
 If not, what resolution from despair.

Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate
 With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
 That sparkling blaz'd; his other parts besides,
 Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
 Lay floating many a rood; in bulk as huge
 As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
 Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove;
 Briareos or Typhon,¹ whom the den
 By ancient Tarsus held; or that sea-beast 200
 Leviathan,² which God of all his works
 Created hugest that swim the ocean stream:
 Him, haply, slumbering on the Norway foam
 The pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff
 Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
 With fixed anchor in his scaly rind

¹ 'Briareos or Typhon:' two mythological monsters commemorated in Ovid.—² 'Leviathan:' Milton means evidently the whale.

Moors by his side under the lee, while night 207
 Invests the sea, and wished morn delays :
 So stretch'd out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay,
 Chain'd on the burning lake : nor ever thence
 Had risen, or heav'd his head, but that the will
 And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
 Left him at large to his own dark designs ;
 That with reiterated crimes he might
 Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
 Evil to others ; and, enrag'd, might see
 How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
 Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy, shown
 On Man by him seduc'd ; but on himself
 Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance, pour'd. 220
 Forthwith, upright he rears from off the pool
 His mighty stature ; on each hand the flames,
 Driven backward, slope their pointing spires, and roll'd
 In billows, leave i' the midst a horrid vale.
 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
 Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air
 That felt unusual weight ; till on dry land
 He lights, if it were land that ever burn'd
 With solid, as the lake with liquid fire :
 And such appear'd in hue, as when the force 230
 Of subterranean wind transports a hill
 Torn from Pelorus,¹ or the shatter'd side
 Of thundering Ætna, whose combustible
 And fuell'd entrails thence conceiving fire,
 Sublim'd with mineral fury, aid the winds,
 And leave a singed bottom all involv'd
 With stench and smoke : such resting found the sole
 Of unblest feet. Him follow'd his next mate ;

¹ 'Pelorus : ' one of the three great promontories of Sicily, now Cape Faro, near Etna.

Both glorying to have 'scap'd the Stygian flood 239
As gods, and by their own recover'd strength,
Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
Said then the lost Arch-Angel, this the seat
That we must change for Heaven ; this mournful gloom,
For that celestial light ? Be it so ! since he,
Who now is Sovran, can dispose, and bid
What shall be right : farthest from Him is best,
Whom reason hath equall'd, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells ! Hail, horrors ! hail, 250
Infernal world ! And thou, profoundest Hell,
Receive thy new possessour !—one who brings
A mind not to be chang'd by place or time :
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be—all but less than He
Whom thunder hath made greater ? Here at least
We shall be free ; the Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence : 260
Here we may reign secure, and, in my choice
To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell :
Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven !
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
The associates and copartners of our loss,
Lie thus astonish'd on the oblivious pool,
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy mansion ; or once more,
With rallied arms, to try what may be yet
Regain'd in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell ? 270

So Satan spake, and him Beëlzebub
Thus answer'd. Leader of those armies bright,

Which, but the Omnipotent, none could have foil'd ! 273
 If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
 Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft
 In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
 Of battle when it rag'd, in all assaults
 Their surest signal, they will soon resume
 New courage and revive ; though now they lie
 Grovelling and prostrate on yon lake of fire, 280
 As we erewhile, astounded and amaz'd ;
 No wonder, fallen such a pernicious highth.

He scarce had ceas'd, when the superiour Fiend
 Was moving toward the shore : his ponderous shield,
 Ethereal temper, massy, large and round,
 Behind him cast ; the broad circumference
 Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
 Through optick glass the Tuscan artist¹ views
 At evening from the top of Fesolè,
 Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands, 290
 Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe.
 His spear, to equal which the tallest pine,
 Hewn on Norwegian hills to be the mast
 Of some great ammiral, were but a wand,
 He walk'd with, to support uneasy steps
 Over the burning marle, not like those steps
 On Heaven's azure ; and the torrid clime
 Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire :
 Nathless he so endur'd, till on the beach
 Of that inflamed sea he stood, and call'd 300
 His legions, Angel forms, who lay intranc'd
 Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
 In Vallombrosa,² where the Etrurian shades,
 High over-arch'd, imbower ; or scatter'd sedge

¹ 'Tuscan artist : ' Galileo.—² 'Vallombrosa : ' a beautiful wooded vale, eighteen miles from Florence.

Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion¹ arm'd 305
 Hath vex'd the Red Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
 Busiris² and his Memphian chivalry,
 While with perfidious hatred they pursued
 The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
 From the safe shore their floating carcasses 310
 And broken chariot-wheels : so thick bestrown,
 Abject and lost lay these, covering the flood,
 Under amazement of their hideous change.
 He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep
 Of Hell resounded !—Princes, potentates,
 Warriours, the flower of heaven ! once yours, now lost,
 If such astonishment as this can seize
 Eternal Spirits ! or have ye chosen this place
 After the toil of battle to repose
 Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find 320
 To slumber here as in the vales of Heaven ?
 Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
 To adore the Conquerour ? who now beholds
 Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood,
 With scatter'd arms and ensigns ; till anon
 His swift pursuers from Heaven-gates discern
 The advantage, and, descending, tread us down
 Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts
 Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf ?
 Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen ! 330

They heard, and were abash'd, and up they sprung
 Upon the wing ; as when men, wont to watch
 On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
 Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
 Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
 In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel ;

¹ 'Orion : ' the warrior constellation, symbolizing storms. — ² 'Busiris : ' Pharaoh.

Yet to their General's voice they soon obey'd, 337
Innumerable. As when the potent rod
Of Amram's son,¹ in Egypt's evil day,
Wav'd round the coast, upcall'd a pitchy cloud
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile :
So numberless were those bad Angels seen
Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell,
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires ;
Till, as a signal given, the uplifted spear
Of their great Sultan waving to direct
Their course, in even balance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain ; 350
A multitude, like which the populous North
Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pass
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
Came like a deluge on the South, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Lybian sands.
Forthwith from every squadron and each band,
The heads and leaders thither haste, where stood
Their great Commander ; Godlike shapes and forms
Excelling human ; princely Dignities
And Powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones ; 360
Though of their names in heavenly records now
Be no memorial ; blotted out and ras'd
By their rebellion from the books of life.
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
Got them new names ; till wandering o'er the earth,
Through God's high sufferance, for the trial of man,
By falsities and lies, the greatest part
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
God their Creator, and the invisible

¹ ' Amram's son : ' Moses.

Glory of him that made them to transform 370
 Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd
 With gay religions, full of pomp and gold,
 And Devils to adore for Deities :
 Then were they known to men by various names,
 And various idols through the Heathen world.

Say, Muse, their names then known ; who first, who last,
 Rous'd from the slumber, on that fiery couch,
 At their great Emperour's call, as next in worth
 Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
 While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof. 380
 The chief were those, who, from the pit of Hell
 Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
 Their seats long after next the seat of God,
 Their altars by his altar ; gods ador'd
 Among the nations round ; and durst abide
 Jehovah thundering out of Sion, thron'd
 Between the Cherubim ; yea, often plac'd
 Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
 Abominations ; and with cursed things
 His holy rites and solemn feasts profan'd, 390
 And with their darkness durst affront his light.

First, Moloch,¹ horrid king, besmear'd with blood
 Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears ;
 Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,
 Their children's cries unheard, that pass'd through fire
 To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
 Worshipp'd in Rabba and her watery plain,
 In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
 Of utmost Arnon ; nor content with such
 Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart 400
 Of Solomon he led by fraud to build

¹ 'Moloch : ' god of the Ammonites, by some supposed identical with the Mars of the Greeks.

His temple right against the temple of God 402
 On that opprobrious hill ; and made his grove
 The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
 And black Gehenna call'd, the type of Hell.
 Next Chemos,¹ the obscene dread of Moab's sons,
 From Aroer to Nebo, and the wild
 Of southmost Abarim ; in Hesebon
 And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
 The flow'ry dale of Sibma clad with vines ; 410
 And Eleälé² to the Asphaltic pool :³
 Peor⁴ his other name, when he entic'd
 Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,
 To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
 Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarg'd
 Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove
 Of Moloch homicide ; lust hard by hate ;
 Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.
 With these came they, who, from the bordering flood
 Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts⁵ 420
 Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
 Of Baälim and Ashtaroth ; those male,
 These feminine : For Spirits, when they please,
 Can either sex assume, or both ; so soft
 And uncompounded is their essence pure ;
 Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,
 Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
 Like cumbrous flesh ; but, in what shape they choose,
 Dilated or condens'd, bright or obscure,
 Can execute their aery purposes, 430
 And works of love or enmity fulfil.
 For those the race of Israel oft forsook

¹ 'Chemos : ' idol of Moabites. — ² 'Aroer,' 'Nebo,' 'Hesebon,' 'Sibma,'
 'Eleälé,' &c. ; all cities of Moab. — ³ 'Asphaltic pool : ' the Dead Sea, so
 called from the asphaltus or bitumen in it. — ⁴ 'Peor : ' Baal Peor. — ⁵ 'The
 brook that parts : ' the brook Besor.

Their Living Strength, and unfrequented left 433
 His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
 To bestial gods ; for which their heads as low
 Bow'd down in battle, sunk before the spear
 Of despicable foes. With these in troop
 Came Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians call'd
 Astarte,¹ queen of Heaven, with crescent horns ;
 To whose bright image nightly by the moon 440
 Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs ;
 In Sion also not unsung, where stood
 Her temple on the offensive mountain,² built
 By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,
 Beguil'd by fair idolatresses, fell
 To idols foul. Thammuz³ came next behind,
 Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd
 The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
 In amorous ditties, all a summer's day ;
 While smooth Adonis⁴ from his native rock 450
 Ran purple to the sea, suppos'd with blood
 Of Thammuz yearly wounded : the love-tale
 Infected Sion's daughters with like heat ;
 Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
 Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led,
 His eye survey'd the dark idolatries
 Of alienated Judah. Next came one
 Who mourn'd in earnest, when the captive ark
 Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopt off
 In his own temple, on the grunsel edge,⁵ 460
 Where he fell flat, and sham'd his worshippers ;
 Dagon his name, sea-monster, upward man

¹ 'Astarte : ' the moon.—² 'Offensive mountain : ' Mount of Olives.—
³ 'Thammuz : ' or Adonis, god of the Syrians, fabled to die and revive each
 year.—⁴ 'Adonis : ' the name of a river rising in Lebanon.—⁵ 'Grunsel
 edge : ' edge of foot-post of his temple.

And downward fish : yet had his temple high 463
 Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
 Of Palestine, in Gath, and Ascalon,
 And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.
 Him follow'd Rimmon,¹ whose delightful seat
 Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
 Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.
 He also 'gainst the house of God was bold : 470
 A leper once he lost, and gain'd a king ;
 Ahaz, his sottish conquerour, whom he drew
 God's altar to disparage, and displace,
 For one of Syrian mould, whereon to burn
 His odious offerings, and adore the gods
 Whom he had vanquish'd. After these appear'd
 A crew, who, under names of old renown,
 Osiris, Isis, Orus,² and their train,
 With monstrous shapes and sorceries abus'd
 Fanatic Egypt and her priests, to seek 480
 Their wandering gods disguis'd in brutish forms
 Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
 The infection, when their borrow'd gold compos'd
 The calf in Oreb ; and the rebel king
 Doubled that sin in Bethel, and in Dan,
 Lik'ning his Maker to the grazed ox ;
 Jehovah, who, in one night, when he pass'd
 From Egypt marching, equall'd with one stroke
 Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.
 Belial came last, than whom a Spirit more lewd 490
 Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
 Vice for itself : to him no temple stood
 Or altar smok'd ; yet who more oft than he

¹ ' Rimmon : ' god of Syrians.—² ' Orus : ' son of Osiris and Isis. It was fabled that when the giants invaded heaven, the gods concealed themselves in Egypt in the forms of various animals.

In temples and at altars, when the priest 494
 Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who fill'd
 With lust and violence the house of God?
 In courts and palaces he also reigns,
 And in luxurious cities, where the noise
 Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
 And injury, and outrage: And when night 500
 Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
 Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
 Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
 In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
 Exposed a matron, to avoid worse rape.

These were the prime in order and in might;
 The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd,
 The Ionian gods, of Javan's¹ issue; held
 Gods, yet confess'd later than Heaven and Earth,²
 Their boasted parents: Titan, Heaven's first-born, 510
 With his enormous brood, and birthright seiz'd
 By younger Saturn; he from mightier Jove,
 His own and Rhea's son, like measure found;
 So Jove usurping reign'd: These first in Crete
 And Ida known, thence on the snowy top
 Of cold Olympus, rul'd the middle air,
 Their highest Heaven; or on the Delphian cliff,
 Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
 Of Dorick land;³ or who, with Saturn old,
 Fled over Adria⁴ to the Hesperian fields,⁵ 520
 And o'er the Celtick⁶ roam'd the utmost isles.⁷

All these and more came flocking; but with looks
 Downcast and damp; yet such wherein appear'd

¹ 'Javan:' fourth son of Japhet; whence supposed to issue the gods of Greece. But an older race had preceded them.—² 'Heaven and Earth:' the Titans, &c. See Keats' *Hyperion*.—³ 'Dorick land:' Greece.—⁴ 'Adria:' the Adriatic.—⁵ 'Hesperian fields:' Italy.—⁶ 'Celtick:' regions inhabited by the Celts.—⁷ 'Utmost isles:' Britain, Ireland, &c.

Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their Chief
Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost 525
In loss itself ; which on his countenance cast
Like doubtful hue : but he, his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd
Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears. 530
Then straight commands, that at the warlike sound
Of trumpets loud, and clarions be uprear'd
His mighty standard : that proud honour claim'd
Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall ;
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurl'd
The imperial ensign ; which, full high advanc'd,
Shone like a meteor, streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden lustre rich imblaz'd,
Seraphic arms and trophies ; all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds : 540
At which the universal host upsent
A shout, that tore Hell's concave, and, beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air
With orient colours waving : with them rose
A forest huge of spears ; and thronging helms
Appear'd, and serried shields in thick array
Of depth immeasurable : Anon they move
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood 550
Of flutes and soft recorders ; such as rais'd
To highth of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle ; and, instead of rage,
Deliberate valour breath'd, firm and unmov'd
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat ;
Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage,
With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase

Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain, 558
 From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,
 Breathing united force, with fixed thought,
 Mov'd on in silence to soft pipes, that charm'd
 Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil : and now,
 Advanc'd in view, they stand ; a horrid front
 Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
 Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield ;
 Awaiting what command their mighty Chief
 Had to impose : He through the armed files
 Darts his experienc'd eye, and soon traverse
 The whole battalion views ; their order due ;
 Their visages and stature as of gods ; 570
 Their number last he sums. And now his heart
 Distends with pride, and hardening in his strength
 Glories : for never, since created man,
 Met such imbodied force, as nam'd with these
 Could merit more than that small infantry¹
 Warr'd on by cranes ; though all the giant brood
 Of Phlegra with the heroic race were join'd
 That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
 Mix'd with auxiliar gods ; and what resounds
 In fable or romance of Uther's son² 580
 Begirt with British and Armorick knights ;
 And all who since, baptiz'd or infidel,
 Jousted in Aspramont, or Montalban,
 Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisonde,
 Or whom Biserta sent from Africk shore,
 When Charlemain with all his peerage fell
 By Fontarabbia.³ Thus far these beyond
 Compare of mortal prowess yet observ'd

¹ 'Small infantry : ' Pygmies. — ² 'Uther's son : ' King Arthur. — ³ 'Aspramont,'
 'Montalban,' 'Biserta,' 'Fontarabbia,' &c. ; all places famous in romantic
 history, and chiefly for contests between Saracens and Christians.

Their dread Commander : He, above the rest 589
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower : his form had yet not lost
All its original brightness ; nor appear'd
Less than Arch-Angel ruin'd, and the excess
Of glory obscur'd : as when the sun, new risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams ; or, from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. Darken'd so, yet shone
Above them all, the Arch-Angel : but his face 600
Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd ; and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge : cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion, to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather,
(Far other once beheld in bliss) condemn'd
For ever now to have their lot in pain ;
Millions of spirits for his fault amerc'd
Of Heaven, and from eternal splendours flung 610
For his revolt ; yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory wither'd : as when Heaven's fire
Hath scath'd the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
With singed top their stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepar'd
To speak ; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
With all his peers : Attention held them mute.
Thrice he assay'd, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
Tears, such as Angels weep, burst forth : at last 620
Words, interwove with sighs, found out their way.
O Myriads of immortal Spirits ! O Powers

Matchless but with the Almighty ! and that strife 623
Was not inglorious, though the event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change
Hateful to utter : but what power of mind,
Foreseeing, or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd
How such united force of gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse ? 630
For who can yet believe, though after loss,
That all these puissant legions, whose exile
Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to reascend
Self-raised, and repossess their native seat ?
For me, be witness all the host of Heaven,
If counsels different, or dangers shunn'd
By me, have lost our hopes. But he, who reigns
Monarch in Heaven, till then as one secure
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent, or custom ; and his regal state 640
Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd,
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own ;
So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war provok'd : our better part remains
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not : that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new worlds ; whereof so rife 650
There went a fame in Heaven that he erelong
Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation, whom his choice regard
Should favour equal to the sons of Heaven :
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
Our first eruption ; thither or elsewhere :

For this infernal pit shall never hold
 Celestial Spirits in bondage, nor the abyss
 Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
 Full counsel must mature: Peace is despair'd;
 For who can think submission? War then, War,
 Open or understood, must be resolv'd. 657

He spake: and, to confirm his words, out flew
 Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
 Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze
 Far round illumin'd Hell: Highly they rag'd
 Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms,
 Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,
 Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heaven.

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top 670
 Belch'd fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
 Shone with a glossy scurf; undoubted sign
 That in his womb was hid metallick ore,
 The work of sulphur.¹ Thither, wing'd with speed,
 A numerous brigad hasten'd: as when bands
 Of pioneers, with spade and pickaxe arm'd,
 Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
 Or cast a rampart. Mammon² led them on;
 Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell
 From Heaven; for e'en in Heaven his looks and thoughts
 Were always downward bent, admiring more 681
 The riches of Heaven's pavement, trodden gold,
 Than aught, divine or holy, else enjoy'd
 In vision beatifick: by him first
 Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
 Ransack'd the center, and with impious hands
 Rifled the bowels of their mother Earth,
 For treasures, better hid. Soon had his crew

¹ 'The work of sulphur:' sulphur in ancient days was thought the genitrix of gold.—² 'Mammon:' the word is Syriac, and signifies riches.

Open'd into the hill a spacious wound, 689
 And digg'd out ribs of gold. Let none admire
 That riches grow in Hell ; that soil may best
 Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
 Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell
 Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
 Learn how their greatest monuments of fame,
 And strength, and art, are easily outdone
 By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour
 What in an age they with incessant toil
 And hands innumerable scarce perform.
 Nigh on the plain, in many cells prepar'd, 700
 That underneath had veins of liquid fire
 Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude
 With wonderous art, founded the massy ore,
 Severing each kind, and scumm'd the bullion dross :
 A third as soon had form'd within the ground
 A various mould, and from the boiling cells
 By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook ;
 As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
 To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
 Anon, out of the earth, a fabric huge 710
 Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
 Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,
 Built like a temple, where pilasters round
 Were set, and Dorick pillars overlaid
 With golden architrave ; nor did there want
 Cornice or freeze, with bossy sculptures graven :
 The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
 Nor great Alcairo, such magnificence
 Equall'd in all their glories, to enshrine
 Belus or Sérapis,¹ their gods ; or seat 720
 Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove

¹ ' Sérapis : ' an Egyptian god.

In wealth and luxury. The ascending pile 722
 Stood fix'd her stately highth : and straight the doors,
 Opening their brazen folds, discover, wide
 Within, her ample spaces, o'er the smooth
 And level pavement : from the arched roof,
 Pendent by subtle magick, many a row
 Of starry lamps and blazing cressets,¹ fed
 With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light
 As from a sky. The hasty multitude 730
 Admiring enter'd ; and the work some praise,
 And some the architect : his hand was known
 In Heaven by many a tower'd structure high,
 Where scepter'd Angels held their residence,
 And sat as princes ; whom the Supreme King
 Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
 Each in his hierarchy, the Orders bright.
 Nor was his name unheard or unador'd
 In ancient Greece ; and in Ausonian² land
 Men called him Mulciber ;³ and how he fell 740
 From Heaven, they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
 Sheer o'er the crystal battlements : from morn
 To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
 A summer's day ; and with the setting sun
 Dropt from the zenith like a falling star,
 On Lemnos, the Ægean isle : thus they relate,
 Erring ; for he with his rebellious rout
 Fell long before ; nor aught avail'd him now
 To have built in Heaven high towers ; nor did he 'scape
 By all his engines, but was headlong sent 750
 With his industrious crew, to build in Hell.

Meanwhile, the winged heralds, by command
 Of sovran power, with awful ceremony

¹ 'Cressets:' beacon lights, which anciently had a cross on their top, and were called '*croisettes*.'—² 'Ausonian:' Italian.—³ 'Mulciber:' Vulcan.

And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim 754
 A solemn council, forthwith to be held
 At Pandemonium ; the high capital
 Of Satan and his peers : their summons call'd
 From every band and squared regiment,
 By place or choice the worthiest ; they anon,
 With hundreds and with thousands, trooping came, 760
 Attended : all access was throng'd ; the gates
 And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
 (Though like a cover'd field, where champions bold
 Wont ride in arm'd, and at the Soldan's¹ chair
 Defied the best of Panim² chivalry
 To mortal combat, or career with lance),
 Thick swarm'd both on the ground and in the air
 Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
 In spring-time, when the sun with Taurus³ rides,
 Pour forth their populous youth about the hive 770
 In clusters : they among fresh dewes and flowers,
 Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
 The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
 New rubb'd with balm, expatiate and confer
 Their state affairs. So thick the aery crowd
 Swarm'd, and were straiten'd ; till, the signal given,
 Behold a wonder ! They but now who seem'd
 In bigness to surpass Earth's giant sons,
 Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
 Throng numberless, like that Pygmean race 780
 Beyond the Indian mount ; or faery elves,
 Whose midnight revels, by a forest-side
 Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
 Or dreams he sees, while overhead the moon

¹ 'Soldan : ' Sultan.—² 'Panim : ' Pagan ; referring to ancient single combats between the Christians and Saracens.—³ 'Taurus : ' the Bull—the sign of April.

Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth 785
Wheels her pale course ; they, on their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocund music charm his ear ;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms
Reduc'd their shapes immense, and were at large,
Though without number still, amidst the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And in their own dimensions, like themselves,
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim
In close recess and secret conclave sat ; 795
A thousand demigods on golden seats,
Frequent and full. After short silence then,
And summons read, the great consult began.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

The consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle be to be hazarded for the recovery of heaven:—Some advise it, others dissuade:—A third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan, to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature, equal, or not much inferior, to themselves, about this time to be created: Their doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search;—Satan their chief undertakes alone the voyage;—is honoured and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways, and to several employments, as their inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to Hell-gates;—finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them;—by whom at length they are opened, and discover to him the great gulf between hell and heaven,—with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the Power of that place, to the sight of this new world which he sought.

HIGH on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus¹ and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East, with richest hand,
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd
To that bad eminence: and, from despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high; insatiate to pursue
Vain war with heaven; and, by success² untaught,
His proud imaginations thus display'd. 10

Powers and Dominions, Deities of Heaven!
For since no deep within her gulf can hold
Immortal vigour, though oppress'd and fallen,
I give not Heaven for lost. From this descent

¹ 'Ormus:' an island in the Persian Gulf.—² 'Success:' i. e., bad success.

Celestial virtues rising, will appear 15
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate.
Me, though just right, and the fix'd laws of Heaven
Did first create your Leader ; next, free choice,
With what besides, in council or in fight, 20
Hath been achiev'd of merit ; yet this loss,
Thus far at least recover'd, hath much more
Establish'd in a safe unenvied throne,
Yielded with full consent. The happier state
In Heaven, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferiour ; but who here
Will envy whom the highest place exposes
Foremost to stand against the Thunderer's aim,
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
Of endless pain ? Where there is then no good 30
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
From faction ; for none sure will claim in Hell
Precedence ; none whose portion is so small
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
Will covet more. With this advantage then
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in Heaven, we now return
To claim our just inheritance of old,
Surer to prosper than prosperity
Could have assur'd us ; and, by what best way, 40
Whether of open war or covert guile,
We now debate : Who can advise, may speak.

He ceas'd ; and next him Moloch, scepter'd king,
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest Spirit
That fought in heaven, now fiercer by despair :
His trust was with the Eternal to be deem'd
Equal in strength ; and rather than be less
Car'd not to be at all ; with that care lost

Went all his fear : of God, or hell, or worse, 49
He reck'd not ; and these words thereafter spake.

My sentence is for open war : Of wiles,
More unexpert, I boast not : them let those
Contrive who need, or when they need ; not now.
For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait
The signal to ascend, sit lingering here
Heaven's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place
Accept this dark, opprobrious den of shame,
The prison of his tyranny who reigns
By our delay ? No ! let us rather choose, 60
Arm'd with Hell-flames and fury, all at once,
O'er Heaven's high towers to force resistless way,
Turning our tortures into horrid arms
Against the Torturer ; when to meet the noise
Of his almighty engine, he shall hear
Infernal thunder ; and, for lightning, see
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
Among his Angels ; and his throne itself
Mix'd with Tartarean sulphur, and strange fire,
His own invented torments. But perhaps 70
The way seems difficult and deep to scale
With upright wing against a higher foe.
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench
Of that forgetful lake benum not still,
That in our proper motion we ascend
Up to our native seat : Descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce Foe hung on our broken rear
Insulting, and pursued us through the deep,
With what compulsion and laborious flight 80
We sunk thus low ? The ascent is easy then ;
The event is fear'd ; should we again provoke

Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find 83
 To our destruction ; if there be in Hell
 Fear to be worse destroy'd : What can be worse
 Than to dwell here, driven out from bliss, condemn'd
 In this abhorred deep to utter woe ;
 When pain of unextinguishable fire
 Must exercise us without hope of end,
 The vassals of his anger, when the scourge 90
 Inexorably, and the torturing hour,
 Calls us to penance ? More destroy'd than thus,
 We should be quite abolish'd, and expire.
 What fear we then ? what doubt we to incense
 His utmost ire ? which, to the highth enrag'd,
 Will either quite consume us, and reduce
 To nothing this essential ; happier far
 Than miserable to have eternal being :
 Or if our substance be indeed divine,
 And cannot cease to be, we are at worst 100
 On this side nothing ; and by proof we feel
 Our power sufficient to disturb his Heaven,
 And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
 Though inaccessible, his fatal throne :
 Which, if not victory, is yet revenge.

He ended frowning, and his look denounc'd
 Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous
 To less than gods. On the other side up-rose
 Belial, in act more graceful than humane :
 A fairer person lost not Heaven ; he seem'd 110
 For dignity compos'd, and high exploit :
 But all was false and hollow ; though his tongue
 Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear
 The better reason, to perplex and dash
 Maturest counsels : for his thoughts were low :
 To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds

Timorous and slothful : yet he pleas'd the ear, 117
And with persuasive accent thus began.

I should be much for open war, O Peers,
As not behind in hate ; if what was urg'd
Main reason to persuade immediate war,
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success ;
When he, who most excels in fact of arms,
In what he counsels, and in what excels,
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
First, what revenge ? The towers of Heav'n are fill'd
With armed watch, that render all access 130
Impregnable : oft on the bordering deep
Encamp their legions ; or, with obscure wing,
Scout far and wide into the realm of night,
Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way
By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise
With blackest insurrection, to confound
Heaven's purest light ; yet our great Enemy,
All incorruptible, would on his throne
Sit unpolluted ; and the ethereal mould,
Incapable of stain, would soon expel 140
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,
Victorious. Thus repuls'd, our final hope
Is flat despair : We must exasperate
The Almighty Victor to spend all his rage,
And that must end us ; that must be our cure,
To be no more. Sad cure ! for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated night, 150

Devoid of sense and motion ? And who knows, 151
Let this be good, whether our angry Foe
Can give it, or will ever ? how he can,
Is doubtful ; that he never will, is sure.
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,
Belike through impotence, or unaware,
To give his enemies their wish, and end
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
To punish endless ? Wherefore cease we then ?
Say they who counsel war, we are decreed, 160
Reserv'd, and destin'd to eternal woe ;
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
What can we suffer worse ? Is this then, worst,
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms ?
What ! when we fled amain, pursued, and struck
With Heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought
The deep to shelter us ? This Hell then seem'd
A refuge from those wounds : or when we lay
Chain'd on the burning lake ? That sure was worse.
What if the breath, that kindled those grim fires, 170
Awak'd, should blow them into sevenfold rage,
And plunge us in the flames ? or, from above,
Should intermitted vengeance arm again
His red right hand to plague us ? What if all
Her stores were open'd, and this firmament
Of Hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
Impendent horrors, threatening hideous fall
One day upon our heads ; while we perhaps,
Designing or exhorting glorious war,
Caught in a fiery tempest shall be hurl'd, 180
Each on his rock transfix'd, the sport and prey
Of racking whirlwinds ; or for ever sunk
Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains ;
There to converse with everlasting groans,

Unrespited, unpitied, unrepriev'd, 185
Ages of hopeless end? This would be worse.
War therefore, open or conceal'd, alike
My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
With Him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
Views all things at one view? He from Heaven's highth
All these our motions vain sees, and derides;
Not more almighty to resist our might
Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
Shall we then live thus vile, the race of Heaven
Thus trampled, thus expell'd to suffer here
Chains and these torments? better these than worse,
By my advice; since fate inevitable
Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
The Victor's will. To suffer, as to do,
Our strength is equal, nor the law unjust 200
That so ordains: This was at first resolv'd,
If we were wise, against so great a Foe
Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
I laugh, when those who at the spear are bold
And venturous, if that fail them, shrink, and fear
What yet they know must follow, to endure
Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
The sentence of their Conquerour: This is now
Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,
Our Supreme Foe in time may much remit 210
His anger; and perhaps, thus far remov'd,
Not mind us not offending, satisfied
With what is punish'd; whence these raging fires
Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
Our purer essence then will overcome
Their noxious vapour; or, inur'd, not feel;
Or, chang'd at length, and to the place conform'd
In temper and in nature, will receive

Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain ; 219
This horror will grow mild, this darkness light ;
Besides what hope the never-ending flight
Of future days may bring, what chance, what change
Worth waiting ; since our present lot appears
For happy, though but ill, for ill not worst,
If we procure not to ourselves more woe.

Thus Belial, with words cloth'd in reason's garb,
Counsell'd ignoble ease and peaceful sloth,
Not peace : and after him thus Mammon spake.

Either to disenthroned the King of Heaven
We war, if war be best, or to regain 230
Our own right lost : Him to unthroned we then
May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield
To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife :
The former, vain to hope, argues as vain
The latter : For what place can be for us
Within Heaven's bound, unless Heaven's Lord Supreme
We overpower ? Suppose he should relent,
And publish grace to all, on promise made
Of new subjection ; with what eyes could we
Stand in his presence humble, and receive 240
Strict laws impos'd, to celebrate his throne
With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
Forc'd Halleluiahs ; while he lordly sits
Our envied Sovran, and his altar breathes
Ambrosial odours, and ambrosial flowers,
Our servile offerings ? This must be our task
In Heaven, this our delight ; how wearisome
Eternity so spent, in worship paid
To whom we hate ! Let us not then pursue,
By force impossible, by leave obtain'd 250
Unacceptable, though in Heaven, our state
Of splendid vassalage ; but rather seek

Our own good from ourselves, and from our own 253
 Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,
 Free, and to none accountable, preferring
 Hard liberty before the easy yoke
 Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
 Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
 Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse,
 We can create ; and in what place soe'er 260
 Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain,
 Through labour and endurance. This deep world
 Of darkness do we dread ? How oft amidst
 Thick clouds and dark doth Heaven's all-ruling Sire
 Choose to reside, his glory unobscur'd,
 And with the majesty of darkness round
 Covers his throne ; from whence deep thunders roar
 Mustering their rage, and Heaven resembles Hell ?
 As he our darkness, cannot we his light
 Imitate when we please ? This desart soil 270
 Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold ;
 Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
 Magnificence ; and what can Heaven show more ?
 Our torments also may, in length of time,
 Become our elements ; these piercing fires,
 As soft as now severe, our temper chang'd
 Into their temper ; which must needs remove
 The sensible of pain. All things invite
 To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
 Of order, how in safety best we may 280
 Compose our present evils, with regard
 Of what we are, and where ; dismissing quite
 All thoughts of war : Ye have what I advise.
 He scarce had finish'd, when such murmur fill'd
 The assembly, as when hollow rocks retain
 The sound of blustering winds, which all night long

Had rous'd the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull 287
 Seafaring men o'er-watch'd, whose bark by chance,
 Or pinnacle, anchors in a craggy bay
 After the tempest: Such applause was heard
 As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleas'd,
 Advising peace: for such another field
 They dreaded worse than Hell: So much the fear
 Of thunder and the sword of Michaël
 Wrought still within them; and no less desire
 To found this nether empire, which might rise,
 By policy, and long process of time,
 In emulation opposite to Heaven.
 Which when Beëlzebub perceiv'd, than whom,
 Satan except, none higher sat, with grave 300
 Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
 A pillar of state: deep on his front engraven
 Deliberation sat, and public care;
 And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
 Majestic, though in ruin: sage he stood,
 With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
 The weight of mightiest monarchies: his look
 Drew audience and attention still as night
 Or summer's noontide air, while thus he spake.

Thrones and Imperial Powers, Offspring of Heaven,
 Ethereal Virtues! or these titles now 311
 Must we renounce, and, changing style, be call'd
 Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
 Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
 A growing empire; doubtless; while we dream,
 And know not that the King of Heaven hath doom'd
 This place our dungeon; not our safe retreat
 Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
 From Heaven's high jurisdiction, in new league
 Banded against his throne, but to remain,

In strictest bondage, though thus far remov'd 321
Under the inevitable curb, reserv'd
His captive multitude : For He, be sure,
In highth or depth, still first and last will reign
Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part
By our revolt ; but over Hell extend
His empire, and with iron scepter rule
Us here, as with his golden those in Heaven.
What sit we then projecting peace and war ?
War hath determin'd us, and foil'd with loss 330
Irreparable ; terms of peace yet none
Vouchsaf'd or sought ; for what peace will be given
To us enslav'd, but custody severe,
And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
Inflicted ? and what peace can we return,
But to our power hostility and hate,
Untam'd reluctance, and revenge though slow,
Yet ever plotting how the Conquerour least
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
In doing what we most in suffering feel ? 340
Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need,
With dangerous expedition, to invade
Heaven, whose high walls fear no assault, or siege,
Or ambush from the deep. What if we find
Some easier enterprise ? There is a place
(If ancient and prophetick fame in Heaven
Err not), another world, the happy seat
Of some new race called Man, about this time
To be created like to us, though less
In power and excellence, but favour'd more 350
Of Him who rules above : so was his will
Pronounc'd among the gods, and by an oath,
That shook heaven's whole circumference, confirm'd:
Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn

What creatures there inhabit, of what mould, 355
Or substance, how endued, and what their power,
And where their weakness, how attempted best,
By force or subtlety. Though Heaven be shut,
And Heaven's high Arbitrator sit secure
In his own strength, this place may lie expos'd, 360
The utmost border of his kingdom, left
To their defence who hold it: Here perhaps
Some advantageous act may be achiev'd
By sudden onset; either with Hell fire
To waste his whole creation, or possess
All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,
The puny habitants; or, if not drive,
Seduce them to our party, that their God
May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
Abolish his own works. This would surpass 370
Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
In our confusion, and our joy upraise
In his disturbance; when his darling sons,
Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse
Their frail original, and faded bliss,
Faded so soon. Advise, if this be worth
Attempting, or to sit in darkness here
Hatching vain empires. Thus Beëlzebub
Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devis'd
By Satan, and in part propos'd: For whence, 380
But from the author of all ill, could spring
So deep a malice, to confound the race
Of mankind in one root, and Earth with Hell
To mingle and involve, done all to spite
The Great Creator? But their spite still serves
His glory to augment. The bold design
Pleas'd highly those infernal States, and joy

Sparkled in all their eyes ; with full assent 388
 They vote : whereat his speech he thus renews.

Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate,
 Synod of gods ! and, like to what ye are,
 Great things resolv'd, which, from the lowest deep,
 Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
 Nearer our ancient seat ; perhaps in view
 Of those bright confines, whence, with neighbouring arms
 And opportune excursion, we may chance
 Re-enter Heaven ; or else in some mild zone
 Dwell, not unvisited of Heaven's fair light,
 Secure ; and at the brightening orient beam
 Purge off this gloom : the soft delicious air, 400
 To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
 Shall breathe her balm. But first, whom shall we send
 In search of this new world ? whom shall we find
 Sufficient ? who shall tempt with wandering feet
 The dark, unbottom'd, infinite abyss,
 And through the palpable obscure find out
 His uncouth way, or spread his aery flight,
 Upborne with indefatigable wings,
 Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
 The happy isle ? What strength, what art, can then 410
 Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
 Through the strict senteries, and stations thick
 Of Angels watching round ? Here he had need
 All circumspection ; and we now no less
 Choice in our suffrage ; for, on whom we send,
 The weight of all, and our last hope, relies.

This said, he sat ; and expectation held
 His look suspense, awaiting who appear'd
 To second, or oppose, or undertake
 The perilous attempt : but all sat mute, 420
 Pondering the danger with deep thoughts ; and each

In other's countenance read his own dismay, 422
Astonish'd : None, among the choice and prime
Of those Heaven-warring champions, could be found
So hardy, as to proffer, or accept,
Alone, the dreadful voyage ; till at last
Satan, whom now transcendent glory rais'd
Above his fellows, with monarchal pride,
Conscious of highest worth, unmov'd thus spake :

O Progeny of Heaven, empyreal Thrones ! 430
With reason hath deep silence and demur
Seiz'd us, though undismay'd : Long is the way
And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light ;
Our prison strong ; this huge convex of fire,
Outrageous to devour, immures us round,
Ninefold ; and gates of burning adamant,
Barr'd over us, prohibit all egress.
These pass'd, if any pass, the void profound
Of unessential Night receives him next
Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being 440
Threatens him, plung'd in that abortive gulf.
If thence he 'scape into whatever world
Or unknown region, what remains him less
Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape ?
But I should ill become this throne, O Peers,
And this imperial sovranity, adorn'd
With splendour, arm'd with power, if aught propos'd
And judg'd of public moment, in the shape
Of difficulty or danger, could deter
Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume 450
These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
Refusing to accept as great a share
Of hazard as of honour, due alike
To him who reigns, and so much to him due,
Of hazard more, as he above the rest

High honour'd sits ? Go, therefore, mighty Powers, 456
Terroure of Heaven, though fallen ! intend at home,
While here shall be our home, what best may ease
The present misery, and render Hell
More tolerable : if there be cure or charm
To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
Of this ill mansion ; intermit no watch
Against a wakeful Foe, while I abroad
Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek
Deliverance for us all : This enterprise
None shall partake with me. Thus saying, rose
The Monarch, and prevented all reply ;
Prudent, lest, from his resolution rais'd,
Others among the chief might offer now
(Certain to be refus'd) what erst they fear'd : 470
And, so refus'd, might in opinion stand
His rivals ; winning cheap the high repute,
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
Dreaded not more the adventure, than his voice
Forbidding ; and at once with him they rose :
Their rising all at once was as the sound
Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend
With awful reverence prone ; and as a god
Extol him equal to the Highest in Heaven :
Nor fail'd they to express how much they prais'd 480
That for the general safety he despis'd
His own ; For neither do the Spirits damn'd
Lose all their virtue ; lest bad men should boast
Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,
Or close ambition, varnish'd o'er with zeal.
Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
Ended, rejoicing in their matchless Chief :
As when from mountain-tops the dusky clouds
Ascending, while the north wind sleeps, o'erspread

Heaven's cheerful face, the louring element 490
 Scowls o'er the darken'd landskip snow, or shower;
 If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
 Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
 The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
 Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.
 O shame to men! Devil with devil damn'd
 Firm concord holds; men only disagree
 Of creatures rational, though under hope
 Of heavenly grace: and, God proclaiming peace,
 Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife, 500
 Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
 Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:
 As if (which might induce us to accord)
 Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
 That, day and night, for his destruction wait.

The Stygian council thus dissolv'd; and forth
 In order came the grand infernal Peers:
 Midst came their mighty Paramount, and seem'd
 Alone the Antagonist of Heaven, nor less
 Than Hell's dread Emperour, with pomp supreme, 510
 And God-like imitated state: him round
 A globe of fiery Seraphim enclos'd,
 With bright emblazonry, and horrent arms.
 Then of their session ended they bid cry
 With trumpets' regal sound the great result:
 Towards the four winds four speedy Cherubim
 Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy,¹
 By herald's voice explain'd; the hollow abyss
 Heard far and wide, and all the host of Hell
 With deafening shout return'd them loud acclaim. 520
 Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat rais'd
 By false presumptuous hope, the ranged Powers

¹ 'Alchemy' means here any mixed metal.

Disband ; and wandering, each his several way 523
 Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
 Leads him perplex'd, where he may likeliest find
 Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
 The irksome hours, till his great Chief return.
 Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,
 Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,
 As at the Olympian games, or Pythian fields : 530
 Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
 With rapid wheels, or fronted brigads form.
 As when, to warn proud cities, war appears
 Wag'd in the troubled sky, and armies rush
 To battle in the clouds, before each van
 Prick forth the aery knights, and couch their spears,
 Till thickest legions close ; with feats of arms
 From either end of Heaven the welkin burns.
 Others, with vast Typhœan rage more fell,
 Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air 540
 In whirlwind : Hell scarce holds the wild uproar.
 As when Alcides,¹ from Oechalia² crown'd
 With conquest, felt the envenom'd robe, and tore
 Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,
 And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw
 Into the Euboic sea. Others more mild,
 Retreated in a silent valley, sing
 With notes angelical to many a harp
 Their own heroick deeds and hapless fall
 By doom of battle ; and complain that fate 550
 Free virtue should enthrall to force or chance.
 Their song was partial ; but the harmony
 (What could it less, when Spirits immortal sing ?)
 Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment
 The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet,

¹ 'Alcides : ' Hercules.—² 'Oechalia : ' a mount in Thessaly.

(For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense,) 556
Others apart sat on a hill retir'd,
In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will and fate ;
Fix'd fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute ;
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.
Of good and evil much they argued then,
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion and apathy, and glory and shame ;
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy !
Yet, with a pleasing sorcery, could charm
Pain for a while or anguish, and excite
Fallacious hope, or arm the obdured breast
With stubborn patience, as with triple steel.
Another part, in squadrons and gross bands, 570
On bold adventure to discover wide
That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
Might yield them easier habitation, bend
Four ways their flying march, along the banks
Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge
Into the burning lake their baleful streams ;
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate ;
Sad Acheron, of sorrow, black and deep ;
Cocytus, nam'd of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful stream ; fierce Phlegethon, 580
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
Far off from these, a slow and silent stream,
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her watery labyrinth, whereof who drinks,
Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
Beyond this flood a frozen continent
Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land

Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems 590
 Of ancient pile ; or else deep snow and ice,
 A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog¹
 Betwixt Damyata and Mount Casius old,
 Where armies whole have sunk : The parching air
 Burns frore, and cold performs the effect of fire.
 Thither, by harpy-footed Furies hal'd,
 At certain revolutions, all the damn'd
 Are brought ; and feel by turns the bitter change
 Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,
 From beds of raging fire, to starve in ice 600
 Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
 Immoveable, infix'd, and frozen round,
 Periods of time, thence hurried back to fire.
 They ferry over this Lethean sound
 Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,
 And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
 The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
 In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
 All in one moment, and so near the brink ;
 But Fate withstands, and, to oppose the attempt, 610
 Medusa with Gorgonian terrour guards
 The ford, and of itself the water flies
 All taste of living wight, as once it fled
 The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on
 In confus'd march forlorn, the adventurous bands,
 With shuddering horror pale, and eyes aghast,
 View'd first their lamentable lot, and found
 No rest : Through many a dark and dreary vale
 They pass'd, and many a region dolorous,
 O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp, 620
 Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,

¹ 'Serbonian bog:' the Lake Serbonis in Egypt, surrounded by hills of loose sand, which fall into it—in compass one thousand furlongs.

A universe of death ; which God by curse 622
 Created evil, for evil only good,
 Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,
 Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
 Abominable, inutterable, and worse
 Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,
 Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimeras dire.

Meanwhile, the Adversary of God and man,
 Satan, with thoughts inflam'd of highest design, 630
 Puts on swift wings, and towards the gates of Hell
 Explores his solitary flight : sometimes
 He scours the right hand coast, sometimes the left ;
 Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars
 Up to the fiery concave, towering high.
 As when far off at sea a fleet descried
 Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
 Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
 Of Ternate and Tidore,¹ whence merchants bring
 Their spicy drugs ; they, on the trading flood² 640
 Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape,
 Ply stemming nightly towards the pole : So seem'd
 Far off the flying Fiend. At last appear
 Hell bounds, high reaching to the horrid roof,
 And thrice threefold the gates ; three folds were brass,
 Three iron, three of adamantine rock,
 Impenetrable, impal'd with circling fire,
 Yet unconsum'd. Before the gates there sat
 On either side a formidable shape ;
 The one seem'd woman to the waist, and fair ; 650
 But ended foul in many a scaly fold
 Voluminous and vast ; a serpent arm'd
 With mortal sting : About her middle round

¹ 'Ternate and Tidore : ' two of the Molucca islands in the East Indian Sea.—

² 'Trading flood : ' flood propelled by the trade winds.

A cry of Hell-hounds never-ceasing bark'd, 654
 With wide Cerberean mouths, full loud, and rung
 A hideous peal ; yet when they list would creep,
 If aught disturb'd their noise, into her womb
 And kennel there ; yet there still bark'd, and howl'd
 Within unseen. Far less abhorr'd than these
 Vex'd Scylla,¹ bathing in the sea that parts 660
 Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian² shore :
 Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, call'd
 In secret, riding through the air she comes,
 Lur'd with the smell of infant blood, to dance
 With Lapland witches, while the labouring moon
 Eclipses at their charms. The other shape,
 If shape it might be call'd that shape had none
 Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb ;
 Or substance might be called that shadow seem'd,
 For each seem'd either ; black it stood as Night, 670
 Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,
 And shook a dreadful dart : what seem'd his head
 The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
 Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
 The monster moving onward came as fast,
 With horrid strides ; Hell trembled as he strode.
 The undaunted Fiend what this might be admir'd,
 Admir'd, not fear'd ; God and his Son except,
 Created thing not valued he, nor shunn'd ;
 And, with disdainful look, thus first began. 680

Whence, and what art thou, execrable shape!
 That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance
 Thy miscreated front athwart my way
 To yonder gates ? through them I mean to pass,
 That be assur'd, without leave ask'd of thee :

¹ ' Scylla : ' See Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, 14th Book—² ' Trinacrian : ' Sicilian.

Retire, or taste thy folly ; and learn by proof, 686
Hell-born ! not to contend with Spirits of Heaven.

To whom the Goblin full of wrath replied :
Art thou that Traitor-Angel, art thou he,
Who first broke peace in Heaven, and faith, till then
Unbroken ; and in proud, rebellious arms,
Drew after him the third part of Heaven's sons
Conjur'd against the Highest ; for which both thou
And they, outcast from God, are here condemn'd
To waste eternal days in woe and pain ?
And reckon'st thou thyself with Spirits of Heaven,
Hell-doom'd ! and breath'st defiance here and scorn,
Where I reign king, and, to enrage thee more,
Thy king and lord ? Back to thy punishment,
False fugitive ! and to thy speed add wings, 700
Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue
Thy lingering, or with one stroke of this dart
Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before.

So spake the grizly Terror, and in shape,
So speaking and so threatening, grew tenfold
More dreadful and deform. On the other side,
Incens'd with indignation, Satan stood
Unterrified, and like a comet burn'd,
That fires the length of Ophiuchus¹ huge
In the arctic sky, and from his horrid hair 710
Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
Levell'd his deadly aim ; their fatal hands
No second stroke intend ; and such a frown
Each cast at the other, as when two black clouds,
With Heaven's artillery fraught, come rattling on
Over the Caspian, then stand front to front,
Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow
To join their dark encounter in mid-air :

¹ ' Ophiuchus : ' or Serpentarius, a constellation extending over forty degrees.

So frown'd the mighty combatants, that Hell 719
 Grew darker at their frown; so match'd they stood;
 For never but once more¹ was either like
 To meet so great a Foe: And now great deeds
 Had been achieved, whereof all Hell had rung,
 Had not the snaky Sorceress, that sat
 Fast by Hell-gate, and kept the fatal key,
 Risen, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.

O Father! what intends thy hand, she cried,
 Against thy only Son? What fury, O Son!
 Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
 Against thy Father's head? and know'st for whom; 730
 For Him who sits above, and laughs the while
 At thee, ordain'd his drudge, to execute
 Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids;
 His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both.
 She spake, and at her words the hellish Pest
 Forbore; then these to her Satan return'd:

So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
 Thou interposest, that my sudden hand,
 Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds
 What it intends; till first I know of thee, 740
 What thing thou art, thus double-form'd; and why,
 In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st
 Me Father, and that phantasm call'st my Son:
 I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
 Sight more detestable than him and thee.

To whom thus the Portress of Hell-gate replied:
 Hast thou forgotten me then, and do I seem
 Now in thine eye so foul? once deem'd so fair
 In Heaven, when at the assembly, and in sight
 Of all the Seraphim with thee combined

¹ 'But once more:' referring to the Messiah, who is to destroy 'Death and him that hath the power of Death.'

In bold conspiracy against Heaven's King, 751
All on a sudden miserable pain
Surpris'd thee, dim thine eyes and dizzy swum
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
Threw forth ; till on the left side opening wide,
Likest to thee in shape and countenance bright,
Then shining heavenly fair, a goddess arm'd,
Out of thy head I sprung : Amazement seiz'd
All the host of Heaven ; back they recoil'd, afraid
At first, and call'd me *Sin*, and for a sign 760
Portentous held me ; but, familiar grown,
I pleas'd and with attractive graces won
The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing,
Becam'st enamour'd, and such joy thou took'st
With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd
A growing burden. Meanwhile, war arose,
And fields were fought in Heaven ; wherein remain'd
(For what could else ?) to our Almighty Foe
Clear victory ; to our part loss and rout, 770
Through all the empyréan ; down they fell,
Driven headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down
Into this deep ; and in the general fall
I also : at which time this powerful key
Into my hand was given, with charge to keep
These gates for ever shut, which none can pass
Without my opening. Pensive here I sat
Alone ; but long I sat not, till my womb,
Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown,
Prodigious motion felt, and rueful throes. 780
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,
Thine own begotten, breaking violent way,
Tore through my entrails, that, with fear and pain
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew

Transform'd : But he my inbred enemy 785
 Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart,
 Made to destroy. I fled, and cried out *Death!*
 Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
 From all her caves, and back resounded *Death!*
 I fled ; but he pursued, (though more it seems 790
 Inflam'd with lust than rage,) and, swifter far,
 Me overtook his mother all dismay'd,
 And, in embraces forcible and foul,
 Ingendering with me, of that rape begot
 These yelling monsters, that, with ceaseless cry,
 Surround me, as thou saw'st ; hourly conceiv'd,
 And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
 To me ; for, when they list, into the womb
 That bred them they return, and howl, and gnaw
 My bowels, their repast ; then, bursting forth 800
 Afresh, with conscious terrors vex me round,
 That rest or intermission none I find.
 Before mine eyes in opposition sits
 Grim Death, my son and foe, who sets them on,
 And me his parent would full soon devour
 For want of other prey, but that he knows
 His end with mine involved ; and knows that I
 Should prove a bitter morsel and his bane,
 Whenever that shall be ; so Fate pronounc'd.
 But thou, O Father ! I forewarn thee, shun 810
 His deadly arrow ; neither vainly hope
 To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
 Though temper'd heavenly ; for that mortal dint,
 Save He who reigns above, none can resist.

She finish'd ; and the subtle Fiend his lore
 Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answer'd smooth.
 Dear Daughter ! since thou claim'st me for thy sire,
 And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge

Of dalliance had with thee in Heaven, and joys 819
 Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change
 Befallen us, unforeseen, unthought of ; know,
 I come no enemy, but to set free
 From out this dark and dismal house of pain
 Both him and thee, and all the heavenly host
 Of Spirits, that, in our just pretences arm'd,
 Fell with us from on high : From them I go
 This uncouth errand sole ; and, one for all,
 Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
 The unfounded deep, and through the void immense
 To search with wand'ring quest a place foretold 830
 Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
 Created, vast and round, a place of bliss
 In the pourlieus of Heaven, and therein plac'd
 A race of upstart creatures, to supply
 Perhaps our vacant room ; though more remov'd,
 Lest Heaven, surcharg'd with potent multitude,
 Might hap to move new broils. Be this, or aught
 Than this more secret now design'd, I haste
 To know ; and, this once known, shall soon return,
 And bring ye to the place where Thou and Death 840
 Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
 Wing silently the buxom¹ air imbalm'd
 With odours ; there ye shall be fed and fill'd
 Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey.

He ceased, for both seem'd highly pleased ; and Death
 Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear
 His famine should be fill'd ; and blest his maw
 Destin'd to that good hour : No less rejoic'd
 His mother bad ; and thus bespake her sire.

The key of this infernal pit by due, 850
 And by command of Heaven's all-powerful King,

¹ 'Buxom : ' yielding.

I keep ; by him forbidden to unlock 352
These adamantine gates ; against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
Fearless to be o'ermatch'd by living might.
But what owe I to his commands above
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
To sit in hateful office here confin'd,
Inhabitant of Heaven, and heavenly born, 860
Here, in perpetual agony and pain,
With terrours and with clamours compass'd round
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed ?
Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
My being gav'st me ; whom should I obey
But thee ? whom follow ? thou wilt bring me soon
To that new world of light and bliss, among
The gods who live at ease, where I shall reign
At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end. 870

Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took ;
And, towards the gate rolling her bestial train,
Forthwith the huge portcullis high up drew,
Which, but herself, not all the Stygian Powers
Could once have mov'd : then in the key-hole turns
The intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Of massy iron, or solid rock, with ease
Unfastens : On a sudden open fly
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound 880
The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. She open'd, but to shut
Excell'd her power ; the gates wide open stood,
That with extended wings a banner'd host,

Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through 886
 With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array ;
 So wide they stood, and, like a furnace-mouth
 Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.
 Before their eyes in sudden view appear
 The secrets of the hoary deep ; a dark
 Illimitable ocean, without bound,
 Without dimension ; where length, breadth, and highth,
 And time, and place, are lost ; where eldest Night
 And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold
 Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
 Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
 For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce,
 Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring
 Their embryon atoms ; they around the flag 900
 Of each his faction, in their several clans,
 Light-arm'd or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift, or slow,
 Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the sands
 Of Barca, or Cyrene's¹ torrid soil,
 Levied to side with warring winds, and poise
 Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere.
 He rules a moment : Chaos umpire sits,
 And by decision more embroils the fray,
 By which he reigns : Next him, high arbiter,
 Chance governs all. Into this wild abyss, 910
 The womb of Nature, and perhaps her grave,
 Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
 But all these in their pregnant causes mix'd
 Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,
 Unless the Almighty Maker them ordain
 His dark materials to create more worlds ;
 Into this wild abyss the wary Fiend
 Stood on the brink of Hell, and look'd a while,

¹ 'Barca and Cyrene : ' regions of Africa.

Pondering his voyage ; for no narrow frith 919
 He had to cross. Nor was his ear less peal'd
 With noises loud and ruinous (to compare
 Great things with small), than when Bellona¹ storms,
 With all her battering engines bent to rase
 Some capital city ; or less than if this frame
 Of Heaven were falling, and these elements
 In mutiny had from her axle torn
 The steadfast earth. At last his sail-broad vans
 He spreads for flight, and, in the surging smoke
 Uplifted spurns the ground ; thence many a league,
 As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides 930
 Audacious ; but, that seat soon failing, meets
 A vast vacuity : All unawares,
 Fluttering his pennons vain, plump down he drops
 Ten thousand fathom deep ; and to this hour
 Down had been falling, had not, by ill chance,
 The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
 Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
 As many miles aloft : That fury staid,
 Quench'd in a boggy Syrtis,² neither sea
 Nor good dry land : Nigh founder'd on he fares, 940
 Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
 Half flying ; behoves him now both oar and sail.
 As when a gryphon,³ through the wilderness
 With winged course, o'er hill or moory dale,
 Pursues the Arimasbian,⁴ who by stealth
 Had from his wakeful custody purloin'd
 The guarded gold : So eagerly the Fiend
 O'er bog, or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
 With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,

¹ 'Bellona : ' the war goddess.—² 'Syrtis : ' a bog.—³ 'Gryphon : ' a fabulous creature ; upper part like an eagle, lower part like a lion ; said to guard gold mines.—⁴ 'Arimaspian : ' a people of Scythia, said to be one-eyed, and fond of gold.

And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies : 950
 At length, a universal hubbub wild
 Of stunning sounds, and voices all confus'd,
 Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
 With loudest vehemence : Thither he plies,
 Undaunted to meet there whatever Power
 Or Spirit of the nethermost abyss
 Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
 Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies
 Bordering on light ; when straight behold the throne
 Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread 960
 Wide on the wasteful deep ; with him entron'd
 Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
 The consort of his reign ; and by him stood
 Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded Name
 Of Demogorgon ;¹ Rumour next and Chance,
 And Tumult and Confusion all embroil'd,
 And Discord with a thousand various mouths.

To whom Satan, turning boldly, thus : Ye Powers
 And Spirits of this nethermost abyss,
 Chaos and ancient Night ! I come no spy, 970
 With purpose to explore or to disturb
 The secrets of your realm ; but, by constraint,
 Wandering this darksome desert, as my way
 Lies through your spacious empire up to light,
 Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek
 What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds
 Confine with Heaven ; or, if some other place,
 From your dominion won, the ethereal King
 Possesses lately, thither to arrive
 I travel this profound ; direct my course ; 980
 Directed, no mean recompence it brings
 To your behoof, if I that region lost,

¹ 'Demogorgon : ' the mystic name of an enchanter.

All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce 983
 To her original darkness and your sway,
 (Which is my present journey), and once more
 Erect the standard there of ancient Night :
 Yours be the advantage all, mine the revenge !

Thus Satan ; and him thus the Anarch old,
 With faltering speech and visage incompos'd,
 Answer'd : I know thee, stranger, who thou art ; 990
 That mighty leading Angel, who of late
 Made head against Heaven's King, though overthrown.
 I saw, and heard ; for such a numerous host
 Fled not in silence through the frightened deep,
 With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
 Confusion worse confounded ; and Heaven-gates
 Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands
 Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
 Keep residence ; if all I can will serve
 That little which is left so to defend, 1000
 Encroach'd on still through your intestine broils,
 Weakening the scepter of old Night : first Hell,
 Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath ;
 Now lately Heaven, and Earth, another world,
 Hung o'er my realm, link'd in a golden chain
 To that side Heaven from whence your legions fell :
 If that way be your walk, you have not far ;
 So much the nearer danger ; go, and speed !
 Havoc, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain.

He ceas'd ; and Satan staid not to reply, 1010
 But, glad that now his sea should find a shore,
 With fresh alacrity, and force renew'd,
 Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,
 Into the wild expanse ; and, through the shock
 Of fighting elements, on all sides round
 Environ'd, wins his way : harder beset,

And more endanger'd, than when Argo¹ pass'd 1017
 Through Bosporus² betwixt the justling rocks :
 Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunn'd
 Charybdis, and by the other whirlpool³ steer'd.
 So he with difficulty and labour hard
 Mov'd on ; with difficulty and labour he ;
 But, he once past, soon after, when man fell,
 Strange alteration ! Sin and Death amain
 Following his track, such was the will of Heaven,
 Pav'd after him a broad and beaten way
 Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
 Tamely endur'd a bridge of wonderous length,
 From Hell continued, reaching the utmost orb
 Of this frail world ; by which the Spirits perverse, 1030
 With easy intercourse pass to and fro
 To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
 God and good Angels guard by special grace.
 But now at last the sacred influence
 Of light appears, and from the walls of Heaven
 Shoots far into the bosom of dim night
 A glimmering dawn : Here Nature first begins
 Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire
 As from her outmost works, a broken foe
 With tumult less, and with less hostile din ; 1040
 That Satan with less toil, and now with ease,
 Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light ;
 And like a weather-beaten vessel holds
 Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn ;
 Or in the emptier waste, resembling air,
 Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
 Far off the empyreal Heaven, extended wide

¹ 'Argo : ' the first long ship ever seen in Greece, which conveyed Jason in search of the Golden Fleece.—² 'Bosporus : ' the Straits of Constantinople.—

³ 'The other whirlpool : ' Scylla.

In circuit, undetermin'd square or round, 1048
 With opal towers and battlements adorn'd
 Of living sapphire, once his native seat ;
 And fast by, hanging in a golden chain,
 This pendent world,¹ in bigness as a star
 Of smallest magnitude close by the moon.
 Thither, full fraught with mischievous revenge,
 Accurs'd, and in a cursed hour, he hies. 1055

¹ ' Pendent world : ' not the earth, but the newly-created heavens and earth.

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

God, sitting on his throne, sees Satan flying towards this world, then newly created; shows him to the Son, who sat at his right hand; foretells the success of Satan in perverting mankind; clears his own justice and wisdom from all imputation, having created man free and able enough to have withstood his tempter; yet declares his purpose of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, as did Satan, but by him seduced. The Son of God renders praises to his Father for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards man: but God again declares that grace cannot be extended towards man without the satisfaction of divine justice: man hath offended the majesty of God by aspiring to godhead, and therefore, with all his progeny, devoted to death, must die, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a ransom for man: the Father accepts him, ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in heaven and earth; commands all the angels to adore him: they obey, and hymning to their harps in full choir, celebrate the Father and the Son. Meanwhile Satan alights upon the bare convex of this world's outermost orb: where wandering, he first finds a place since called the Limbo of Vanity: what persons and things fly up thither: thence comes to the gate of heaven, described ascending by stairs, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it; his passage thence to the orb of the sun; he finds there Uriel, the regent of that orb, but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner angel; and pretending a zealous desire to behold the new creation, and man whom God had placed here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed: alights first on Mount Niphates.

HAIL, holy Light, offspring of Heaven first born,
Or of the Eternal co-eternal beam
May I express thee unblam'd? since God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.
Or hear'st thou¹ rather pure ethereal stream,

¹ 'Hear'st thou:' i. e., art pleased rather to be called.

Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the sun, 8
 Before the Heavens thou wert, and at the voice
 Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest
 The rising world of waters dark and deep,
 Won from the void and formless infinite.
 Thee I re-visit now with bolder wing,
 Escap'd the Stygian pool, though long detain'd
 In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight,
 Through utter and through middle darkness borne,
 With other notes than to the Orphéan lyre,
 I sung of Chaos and eternal Night;
 Taught by the heavenly Muse to venture down
 The dark descent, and up to reascend, 20
 Though hard and rare: Thee I revisit safe,
 And feel thy sovran vital lamp; but thou
 Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
 To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
 So thick a drop serene¹ hath quench'd their orbs,
 Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more
 Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt
 Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
 Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
 Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks² beneath, 30
 That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
 Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget
 Those other two equall'd with me in fate,
 So were I equall'd with them in renown,
 Blind Thamyris,³ and blind Mæonides,⁴
 And Tiresias, and Phineus,⁵ prophets old:
 Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move

¹ 'Drop serene: ' Gutta Serena—² 'The flowery brooks: ' Siloah and Kedron.
 —³ 'Thamyris: ' a Thracian poet—⁴ 'Mæonides: ' Homer, son of Mæon.—
⁵ 'Tiresias and Phineus: ' one a Theban, the other King of Arcadia—both blind
 poets and prophets.

Harmonious numbers ; as the wakeful bird 38
 Sings darkling, and, in shadiest covert hid,
 Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year
 Seasons return ; but not to me returns
 Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
 Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
 Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine ;
 But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
 Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
 Cut off, and, for the book of knowledge fair
 Presented with a universal blank
 Of nature's works to me expung'd and ras'd,
 And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out. 50
 So much the rather thou, celestial Light,
 Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
 Irradiate ; there plant eyes, all mist from thence
 Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
 Of things invisible to mortal sight.

Now had the Almighty Father from above,
 From the pure empyrean where He sits
 High thron'd above all highth, bent down his eye,
 His own works, and their works, at once to view :
 About him all the Sanctities of Heaven 60
 Stood thick as stars, and from his sight receiv'd
 Beatitude past utterance ; on his right
 The radiant image of his glory sat,
 His only Son ; on earth he first beheld
 Our two first parents, yet the only two
 Of mankind, in the happy garden plac'd,
 Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
 Uninterrupted joy, unrivall'd love,
 In blissful solitude ; he then survey'd
 Hell, and the gulf between, and Satan there 70
 Coasting the wall of Heaven on this side Night,

In the dun air sublime, and ready now 72
 To stoop with wearied wings, and willing feet
 On the bare outside of this world, that seem'd
 Firm land imbosom'd, without firmament,
 Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
 Him God beholding from his prospect high,
 Wherein past, present, future, he beholds,
 Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake.

Only begotten Son, seest thou what rage 80
 Transports our Adversary? whom no bounds
 Prescrib'd, no bars of Hell, nor all the chains
 Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyss
 Wide interrupt, can hold; so bent he seems
 On desperate revenge, that shall redound
 Upon his own rebellious head. And now,
 Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way
 Not far off Heaven, in the precincts of light,
 Directly towards the new created world,
 And man there plac'd, with purpose to assay 90
 If him by force he can destroy, or, worse,
 By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert;
 For man will hearken to his glozing lies,
 And easily transgress the sole command,
 Sole pledge of his obedience: So will fall
 He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?
 Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
 All he could have; I made him just and right,
 Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
 Such I created all the ethereal Powers 100
 And Spirits, both them who stood, and them who fail'd;
 Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
 Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
 Of true allegiance, constant faith, or love,
 Where only what they needs must do appear'd,

Not what they would? What praise could they receive?
What pleasure I from such obedience paid, 107
When will and reason (reason also is choice)
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
Made passive both, had serv'd necessity,
Not me? They therefore, as to right belong'd,
So were created, nor can justly accuse
Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,
As if predestination overrul'd
Their will, dispos'd by absolute decree
Or high foreknowledge; they themselves decreed
Their own revolt, not I: if I foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no less prov'd certain unforeknown.
So, without least impulse, or shadow of fate, 120
Or aught by me immutably foreseen,
They trespass, authors to themselves in all
Both what they judge, and what they choose; for so
I form'd them free: and free they must remain,
Till they enthrall themselves; I else must change
Their nature, and revoke the high decree
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
Their freedom; they themselves ordain'd their fall.
The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: Man falls, deceiv'd 130
By the other first: Man therefore shall find grace,
The other none: In mercy and justice both,
Through Heaven and Earth, so shall my glory excel;
But mercy, first and last, shall brightest shine.

Thus, while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd
All Heaven, and in the blessed Spirits elect
Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd.
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most glorious: in him all his Father shone

Substantially express'd ; and in his face 140
 Divine compassion visibly appear'd,
 Love without end, and without measure grace,
 Which uttering, thus he to his Father spake.

O Father ! gracious was that word which clos'd
 Thy sovran sentence, that Man should find grace ;
 For which both Heaven and Earth shall high extol
 Thy praises, with the innumerable sound
 Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
 Encompass'd shall resound thee ever blest.
 For should Man finally be lost, should Man, 150
 Thy creature late so lov'd, thy youngest son,
 Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd
 With his own folly ? That be from thee far,
 That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
 Of all things made, and judgest only right.
 Or shall the Adversary thus obtain
 His end, and frustrate thine ? shall he fulfil
 His malice, and thy goodness bring to nought ?
 Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
 Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to Hell 160
 Draw after him the whole race of mankind,
 By him corrupted ? or wilt thou thyself
 Abolish thy creation, and unmake
 For him what for thy glory thou hast made ?
 So should thy goodness and thy greatness both
 Be question'd and blasphem'd without defence.

To whom the great Creator thus replied.
 O Son ! in whom my soul hath chief delight,
 Son of my bosom, Son who art alone
 My word, my wisdom, and effectual might, 170
 All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
 As my eternal purpose hath decreed ;
 Man shall not quite be lost, but sav'd who will ;

Yet not of will in him, but grace in me 174
Freely vouchsaf'd ; once more I will renew
His lapsed powers, though forfeit, and enthrall'd
By sin to foul exorbitant desires ;
Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
On even ground against his mortal foe ;
By me upheld, that he may know how frail 180
His fallen condition is, and to me owe
All his deliverance, and to none but me.
Some I have chosen of peculiar grace,
Elect above the rest ; so is my will :
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
The incensed Deity, while offer'd grace
Invites : for I will clear their senses dark,
What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due. 190
To prayer, repentance, and obedience due,
Though but endeavour'd with sincere intent,
Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.
And I will place within them as a guide,
My umpire Conscience ; whom if they will hear,
Light after light, well us'd, they shall attain,
And, to the end, persisting, safe arrive.
This my long sufferance, and my day of grace,
They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste ;
But hard be harden'd, blind be blinded more, 200
That they may stumble on, and deeper fall ;
And none but such from mercy I exclude.
But yet all is not done ; Man disobeying,
Disloyal, breaks his fealty, and sins
Against the high supremacy of Heaven,
Affecting Godhead, and, so losing all,
To expiate his treason hath nought left,

But, to destruction sacred and devote, 208
 He, with his whole posterity, must die,
 Die he or justice must ; unless for him
 Some other able, and as willing, pay
 The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
 Say, heavenly Powers, where shall we find such love ?
 Which of ye will be mortal, to redeem
 Man's mortal crime, and just the unjust to save ?
 Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear ?

He ask'd, but all the heavenly choir stood mute,
 And silence was in Heaven : On Man's behalf
 Patron or intercessour none appear'd,
 Much less that durst upon his own head draw 220
 The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.
 And now without redemption all mankind
 Must have been lost, adjudg'd to Death and Hell,
 By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
 In whom the fulness dwells of love divine,
 His dearest mediation thus renew'd.

Father, thy word is past, Man shall find grace ;
 And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,
 The speediest of thy winged messengers,
 To visit all thy creatures, and to all 230
 Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unsought ?
 Happy for Man, so coming ; he her aid
 Can never seek, once dead in sins, and lost ;
 Atonement for himself, or offering meet,
 Indebted, and undone, hath none to bring ;
 Behold me, then : me for him, life for life,
 I offer ; on me let thine anger fall ;
 Account me Man ; I for his sake will leave
 Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
 Freely put off, and for him lastly die 240
 Well pleas'd ; on me let Death wreak all his rage ;

Under his gloomy power I shall not long 242
Lie vanquish'd ; thou hast given me to possess
Life in myself for ever ; by thee I live,
Though now to Death I yield, and am his due,
All that of me can die ; yet, that debt paid,
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave,
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
For ever with corruption there to dwell ;
But I shall rise victorious, and subdue 250
My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil ;
Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
I, through the ample air, in triumph high
Shall lead Hell captive, maugre Hell, and show
The Powers of darkness bound. Thou, at the sight
Pleas'd, out of Heaven shalt look down, and smile,
While, by thee rais'd, I ruin all my foes,
Death last, and with his carcase glut the grave :
Then, with the multitude of my redeem'd, 260
Shall enter Heaven, long absent, and return,
Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain, but peace assur'd
And reconciliation : wrath shall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire.

His words here ended, but his meek aspect
Silent yet spake, and breath'd immortal love
To mortal men, above which only shone
Filial obedience : As a sacrifice
Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will 270
Of his great Father. Admiration seiz'd
All Heaven, what this might mean, and whither tend,
Wondering ; but soon the Almighty thus replied.

O thou, in Heaven and Earth the only peace
Found out for mankind under wrath ! O thou,

My sole complacence ! well thou know'st how dear 276
To me are all my works, nor Man the least,
Though last created ; that for him I spare
Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,
By losing thee awhile, the whole race lost.
Thou, therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
Their nature also to thy nature join ;
And be thyself Man among men on earth,
Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin seed,
By wond'rous birth : Be thou in Adam's room
The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
As in him perish all men, so in thee,
As from a second root, shall be restor'd
As many as are restor'd, without thee none.
His crime makes guilty all his sons ; thy merit, 290
Imputed, shall absolve them who renounce
Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
Receive new life. So Man, as is most just,
Shall satisfy for Man, be judg'd and die,
And dying rise, and rising with him raise
His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life.
So heavenly love shall outdo hellish hate,
Giving to death, and dying to redeem,
So dearly to redeem what hellish hate 300
So easily destroyed, and still destroys
In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
Because thou hast, though thron'd in highest bliss
Equal to God, and equally enjoying
God-like fruition, quitted all, to save
A world from utter loss, and hast been found,
By merit more than birthright, Son of God,

Found worthiest to be so, by being good, 310
Far more than great or high ; because in thee
Love hath abounded more than glory abounds ;
Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
With thee thy manhood also to his throne :
Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign
Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
Anointed universal King ; all power
I give thee ; reign for ever, and assume
Thy merits ; under thee, as head supreme,
Thrones, Princedoms, Powers, Dominions, I reduce : 320
All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide
In Heaven, or Earth, or under Earth in Hell.
When thou, attended gloriously from Heaven,
Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
The summoning Arch-Angels to proclaim
Thy dread tribunal ; forthwith from all winds,
The living, and forthwith the cited dead
Of all past ages, to the gen'ral doom
Shall hasten ; such a peal shall rouse their sleep.
Then all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge 330
Bad men and Angels ; they, arraign'd, shall sink
Beneath thy sentence ; Hell, her numbers full,
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Meanwhile
The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
New Heaven and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell,
And, after all their tribulations long,
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.
Then thou thy regal scepter shalt lay by,
For regal scepter then no more shalt need, 340
God shall be all in all. But, all ye gods,
Adore him who to compass all this dies ;
Adore the Son, and honour him as me.

No sooner had the Almighty ceas'd, but all 344
 The multitude of Angels, with a shout
 Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
 As from blest voices, uttering joy, Heaven rung
 With jubilee, and loud Hosannas fill'd
 The eternal regions : Lowly reverent
 Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground, 350
 With solemn adoration down they cast
 Their crowns inwove with amarant and gold ;
 Immortal amarant,¹ a flower which once
 In Paradise, fast by the tree of life,
 Began to bloom ; but soon for man's offence
 To Heaven remov'd, where first it grew, there grows,
 And flowers aloft shading the fount of life,
 And where the river of bliss, through midst of Heaven,
 Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream ;
 With these that never fade the Spirits elect 360
 Bind their resplendent locks, inwreath'd with beams ;
 Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
 Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
 Impurpled with celestial roses smil'd.
 Then crown'd again, their golden harps they took,
 Harps ever tun'd, that glitt'ring by their side
 Like quivers hung, and, with preamble sweet
 Of charming symphony they introduce
 Their sacred song, and waken raptures high ;
 No voice exempt, no voice but well could join 370
 Melodious part, such concord is in Heaven.

Thee, Father, first they sung, Omnipotent,
 Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
 Eternal King ; the Author of all being,
 Fountain of light, thyself invisible

¹ 'Amarant,' 'incorruptible:' a flower of a purple colour, which never withers.

Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sitt'st 376
Thron'd inaccessible, but when thou shad'st
The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear,
Yet dazzle Heaven, that brightest Seraphim
Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.
Thee, next they sang, of all creation first,
Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,
In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud
Made visible, the Almighty Father shines,
Whom else no creature can behold ; on thee
Impress'd the effulgence of his glory abides,
Transfus'd on thee his ample Spirit rests.
He Heaven of Heavens, and all the Powers therein 390
By thee created ; and by thee threw down
The aspiring Dominations ; Thou that day
Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
Nor stop thy flaming chariot-wheels, that shook
Heaven's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks
Thou drov'st of warring Angels disarray'd.
Back from pursuit thy Powers with loud acclaim
Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes,
Not so on Man : Him through their malice fall'n, 400
Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom
So strictly, but much more to pity incline :
No sooner did thy dear and only Son
Perceive thee purpos'd not to doom frail Man
So strictly, but much more to pity inclin'd,
He, to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
Of mercy and justice in thy face discern'd,
Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
Second to thee, offer'd himself to die

For Man's offence. O unexampled love, 410
 Love nowhere to be found less than Divine !
 Hail, Son of God, Saviour of men ! Thy name
 Shall be the copious matter of my song
 Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise
 Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.

Thus they in Heaven, above the starry sphere,
 Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
 Meanwhile upon the firm opacous globe
 Of this round world, whose first convex divides 420
 The luminous inferior orbs, enclos'd
 From Chaos, and the inroad of Darkness old,
 Satan alighted walks : A globe far off
 It seem'd, now seems a boundless continent
 Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night
 Starless expos'd, and ever-threatening storms
 Of Chaos blust'ring round, inclement sky ;
 Save on that side which, from the wall of Heaven
 Though distant far, some small reflection gains
 Of glimm'ring air less vex'd with tempest loud :
 Here walk'd the Fiend at large in spacious field. 430
 As when a vulture on Imaus¹ bred,
 Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
 Dislodging from a region scarce of prey
 To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanling kids,
 On hills where flocks are fed, flies towards the springs
 Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams ;
 But in his way lights on the barren plains
 Of Sericana,² where Chinese drive
 With sails and wind their cany waggons light :
 So, on this windy sea of land, the Fiend 440
 Walk'd up and down alone, bent on his prey ;

¹ ' Imaus : ' a mountain in Asia.—² ' Sericana : ' a level plain between China and Imaus.

Alone, for other creature in this place, 442
 Living or lifeless, to be found was none ;
 None yet, but store hereafter from the earth
 Up hither, like aëreal vapours flew
 Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
 With vanity had fill'd the works of men :
 Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
 Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,
 Or happiness in this or the other life ; 450
 All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
 Of painful superstition and blind zeal,
 Nought seeking but the praise of men, here find
 Fit retribution, empty as their deeds ;
 All th' unaccomplish'd works of Nature's hand,
 Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,
 Dissolv'd on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
 Till final dissolution, wander here ;
 Not in the neighb'ring moon, as some have dream'd ;
 Those argent fields more likely habitants, 460
 Translated Saints, or middle Spirits hold,
 Betwixt th' angelical and human kind.
 Hither of ill-joined¹ sons and daughters born
 First from the ancient world those giants came
 With many a vain exploit, though then renown'd :
 The builders next of Babel on the plain
 Of Sennaar,² and still with vain design,
 New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build :
 Others came single ; he who, to be deem'd
 A god, leap'd fondly into Ætna's flames, 470
 Empedocles ;³ and he who, to enjoy
 Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the sea,

¹ ' Ill-joined,' &c. : alluding to the sons of God wedding the daughters of men. See Gen. vi. 4.—² ' Sennaar : ' Shinar.—³ ' Empedocles : ' who, to be deemed a god, threw himself unseen into Etna ; but whose brazen slippers, cast out, betrayed the secret.

Cleombrotus ;¹ and many more too long, 473
 Embryos and idiots, eremites and friars,
 White, black, and grey,² with all their trumpery.
 Here pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek
 In Golgotha Him dead who lives in Heaven ;
 And they who, to be sure of Paradise,
 Dying put on the weeds of Dominick,
 Or in Franciscan think to pass disguis'd ; 480
 They pass the planets seven, and pass the fix'd,
 And that crystalline³ sphere whose balance weighs
 The trepidation talk'd, and that first mov'd ;⁴
 And now Saint Peter at Heaven's wicket seems
 To wait them with his keys, and now at foot
 Of Heaven's ascent they lift their feet, when, lo,
 A violent cross wind from either coast
 Blows them transverse, ten thousand leagues awry
 Into the devious air : Then might ye see
 Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, toss'd 490
 And flutter'd into rags ; then relics, beads,
 Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
 The sport of winds : All these, upwhirl'd aloft,
 Fly o'er the backside of the world far off
 Into a Limbo large and broad, since call'd
 The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
 Long after, now unpeopled and untrod.
 All this dark globe the Fiend found as he pass'd,
 And long he wander'd, till at last a gleam
 Of dawning light turn'd thitherward in haste 500
 His travell'd steps : far distant he descries
 Ascending by degrees magnificent

¹ 'Cleombrotus : ' a youth of Epirus, who, having read Plato on the Immortality of the Soul, threw himself into the sea.—² 'White, black, and grey : ' Carmelites, Dominicans, and Franciscans.—³ 'The Crystalline : ' or Tremulous Sphere.—⁴ 'First moved : ' the Primum Mobile.

Up to the wall of Heaven a structure high ; 503
At top whereof, but far more rich, appear'd
The work as of a kingly palace-gate,
With frontispiece of diamond and gold
Embellish'd ; thick with sparkling orient gems
The portal shone, inimitable on earth
By model, or by shading pencil, drawn.
The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw 510
Angels ascending and descending, bands
Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz
Dreaming by night under the open sky,
And waking cried, *This is the gate of heaven.*
Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
There always, but drawn up to Heaven sometimes
Viewless ; and underneath a bright sea flow'd
Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
Who after came from earth, sailing arriv'd 520
Wafted by Angels, or flew o'er the lake
Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
The Fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss :
Direct against which open'd from beneath,
Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
A passage down to the Earth, a passage wide,
Wider by far than that of after-times
Over Mount Sion, and, though that were large, 530
Over the Promis'd Land to God so dear ;
By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
On high behests, his Angels to and fro
Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard
From Paneas,¹ the fount of Jordan's flood,

¹ ' Paneas : ' a city at the foot of Lebanon.

To Bcërsaba, where the Holy Land 536
Borders on Egypt and the Arabian shore ;
So wide the opening seem'd, where bounds were set
To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
Satan from hence, now on the lower stair,
That scal'd by steps of gold to Heaven gate,
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this world at once. As when a scout,
Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
All night, at last by break of cheerful dawn
Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
Which to his eye discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some foreign land
First seen, or some renown'd metropolis
With glistening spires and pinnacles adorn'd, 550
Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams :
Such wonder seiz'd, though after Heaven seen,
The Spirit malign, but much more envy seiz'd,
At sight of all this world beheld so fair.
Round he surveys (and well might where he stood
So high above the circling canopy
Of night's extended shade), from eastern point
Of Libra¹ to the fleecy star that bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
Beyond the horizon ; then from pole to pole 560
He views in breadth, and, without longer pause
Downright into the world's first region throws
His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
Through the pure marble air his oblique way
Amongst innumerable stars, that shone
Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds ;
Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
Like those Hesperian gardens fam'd of old,

¹ ' Libra : ' the Balance.

Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales, 569
Thrice happy isles ; but who dwelt happy there
He stay'd not to enquire : Above them all
The golden sun, in splendour likest Heaven,
Allur'd his eye ; thither his course he bends
Through the calm firmament (but up or down,
By centre or eccentric, hard to tell,
Or longitude), where the great luminary
Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
Dispenses light from far ; they, as they move
Their starry dance in numbers that compute 580
Days, months, and years, towards his all-cheering lamp
Turn swift their various motions, or are turn'd
By his magnetick beam, that gently warms
The universe, and to each inward part
With gentle penetration, though unseen,
Shoots invisible virtue even to the deep ;
So wonderously was set his station bright.
There lands the Fiend, a spot like which perhaps
Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
Through his glaz'd optic tube yet never saw. 590
The place he found beyond expression bright,
Compar'd with aught on earth, metal or stone ;
Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd
With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire ;
If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear ;
If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone
In Aaron's breast-plate, and a stone besides
Imagin'd rather oft than elsewhere seen,
That stone, or like to that, which here below 600
Philosophers in vain so long have sought,
In vain, though by their powerful art they bind

Volatile Hermes,¹ and call up unbound, 603
 In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
 Drain'd through a limbeck to his native form.
 What wonder, then, if fields and regions here
 Breathe forth Elixir pure, and rivers run
 Potable gold, when with one virtuous touch
 The arch-chemick sun, so far from us remote,
 Produces, with terrestrial humour mix'd, 610
 Here in the dark so many precious things
 Of colour glorious and effect so rare ?
 Here matter new to gaze the Devil met
 Undazzled ; far and wide his eye commands ;
 For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,
 But all sunshine, as when his beams at noon
 Culminate from the equator, as they now
 Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
 Shadow from body opaque can fall ; and the air,
 Nowhere so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray 620
 To objects distant far, whereby he soon
 Saw within ken a glorious Angel stand,
 The same whom John saw also in the sun :
 His back was turn'd, but not his brightness hid :
 Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar
 Circled his head, nor less his locks behind
 Illustrious on his shoulders, fledge with wings,
 Lay waving round : on some great charge employ'd
 He seem'd, or fix'd in cogitation deep.
 Glad was the Spirit impure, as now in hope 630
 To find who might direct his wandering flight
 To Paradise, the happy seat of Man,
 His journey's end, and our beginning woe.
 But first he casts to change his proper shape,

¹ 'Hermes,' 'Proteus:' alluding to the pursuit and escape of Matter through its thousand forms, in the researches of Alchemy.

Which else might work him danger or delay ; 635
 And now a stripling Cherub he appears,
 Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
 Youth smil'd celestial, and to every limb
 Suitable grace diffus'd, so well he feign'd:
 Under a coronet his flowing hair 640
 In curls on either cheek play'd ; wings he wore,
 Of many a colour'd plume, sprinkled with gold ;
 His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
 Before his decent steps a silver wand.
 He drew not nigh unheard ; the Angel bright,
 Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,
 Admonish'd by his ear, and straight was known
 The Arch-Angel Uriel,¹ one of the seven
 Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,
 Stand ready at command, and are his eyes 650
 That run through all the Heavens, or down to the Earth
 Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,
 O'er sea and land : him Satan thus accosts.

Uriel, for thou of those seven Spirits that stand
 In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright,
 The first art wont his great authentick will
 Interpreter through highest Heaven to bring,
 Where all his sons thy embassy attend ;
 And here art likeliest by supreme decree
 Like honour to obtain, and as his eye 660
 To visit oft this new creation round ;
 Unspeakable desire to see and know
 All these his wonderous works, but chiefly Man,
 His chief delight and favour, him for whom
 All these his works so wonderous he ordain'd,
 Hath brought me from the choirs of Cherubim
 Alone thus wandering. Brightest Seraph, tell

¹ ' Uriel : ' the Angel of Light.

In which of all these shining orbs hath Man 668
His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell;
That I may find him, and with secret gaze
Or open admiration him behold,
On whom the Great Creator hath bestow'd
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd;
That both in him and all things, as is meet,
The Universal Maker we may praise;
Who justly hath driven out his rebel foes
To deepest Hell, and, to repair that loss,
Created this new happy race of Men
To serve him better: Wise are all his ways. 680

So spake the false dissembler unperceived,
For neither Man nor Angel can discern.
Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
Invisible, except to God alone,
By his permissive will, through Heaven and Earth;
And oft, though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
Where no ill seems: Which now for once beguil'd
Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held 690
The sharpest-sighted Spirit of all in heaven;
Who to the fraudulent impostor foul,
In his uprightness, answer thus return'd:

Fair Angel, thy desire, which tends to know
The works of God, thereby to glorify
The Great Workmaster, leads to no excess
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,
To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps, 700
Contented with report hear only in Heaven:

For wonderful indeed are all his works, 702
Pleasant to know and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance always with delight ;
But what created mind can comprehend
Their number, or the wisdom infinite
That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep ?
I saw when, at his word, the formless mass,
This world's material mould, came to a heap :
Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar 710
Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd ;
Till at his second bidding Darkness fled,
Light shone, and order from disorder sprung :
Swift to their several quarters hasted then
The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire ;
And this ethereal quintessence of Heaven
Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars
Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move ;
Each had his place appointed, each his course ; 720
The rest in circuit walls this universe.
Look downward on that globe, whose hither side
With light from hence, though but reflected, shines ;
That place is Earth, the seat of Man ; that light
His day, which else, as the other hemisphere,
Night would invade ; but there the neighbouring moon
(So call that opposite fair star) her aid
Timely interposes, and her monthly round
Still ending, still renewing, through mid Heaven,
With borrow'd light her countenance triform 730
Hence fills and empties to enlighten the Earth,
And in her pale dominion checks the night.
That spot, to which I point, is Paradise,
Adam's abode ; those lofty shades, his bower.
'Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires.

Thus said, he turn'd ; and Satan, bowing low, 736
As to superiour Spirits is wont in Heaven,
Where honour due and reverence none neglects,
Took leave, and toward the coast of earth beneath,
Down from the ecliptick, sped with hop'd success,
Throws his steep flight in many an aery wheel;
Nor staid, till on Niphates'¹ top he lights.

¹ 'Niphates:' a mount in Assyria near the supposed seat of Paradise.

BOOK IV.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place where he must now attempt the bold enterprise which he undertook alone against God and man, falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions—fear, envy, and despair; but at length confirms himself in evil, journeys on to Paradise, whose outward prospect and situation is described; overleaps the bounds; sits in the shape of a cormorant on the tree of life, as highest in the garden, to look about him. The garden described; Satan's first sight of Adam and Eve; his wonder at their excellent form and happy state, but with resolution to work their fall; overhears their discourse, thence gathers that the tree of knowledge was forbidden them to eat of, under penalty of death; and thereon intends to found his temptation, by seducing them to transgress; then leaves them a while to know further of their state by some other means. Meanwhile Uriel, descending on a sunbeam, warns Gabriel, who had in charge the gate of Paradise, that some evil spirit had escaped the deep, and passed at noon by his sphere, in the shape of a good angel, down to Paradise, discovered after by his furious gestures in the mount. Gabriel promises to find him ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to their rest; their bower described; their evening worship. Gabriel, drawing forth his bands of night-watch to walk the round of Paradise, appoints two strong angels to Adam's bower, lest the evil spirit should be there doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping; there they find him at the ear of Eve tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom questioned, he scornfully answers; prepares resistance, but, hindered by a sign from heaven, flies out of Paradise.

O FOR that warning voice, which he who saw
The Apocalypse, heard cry in Heaven aloud,
Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down to be revenged on men,
Woe to the inhabitants on earth! that now, 5
While time was, our first parents had been warn'd
The coming of their secret foe, and 'scaped,
Haply so 'scaped his mortal snare: For now
Satan, now first inflam'd with rage, came down,

The tempter ere the accuser of mankind, 10
 To wreak on innocent frail Man his loss
 Of that first battle, and his flight to Hell :
 Yet, not rejoicing in his speed, though bold
 Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
 Begins his dire attempt ; which, nigh the birth,
 Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,
 And like a devilish engine back recoils
 Upon himself ; horror and doubt distract
 His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
 The Hell within him ; for within him Hell 20
 He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell
 One step, no more than from himself, can fly
 By change of place : Now conscience wakes despair,
 That slumber'd ; wakes the bitter memory
 Of what he was, what is, and what must be
 Worse ; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
 Sometimes towards Eden, which now in his view
 Lay pleasant, his griev'd look he fixed sad ;
 Sometimes towards Heaven, and the full-blazing sun
 Which now sat high in his meridian tower : 30
 Then, much revolving, thus in sighs began.

O thou, that with surpassing glory crown'd,
 Look'st from thy sole dominion like the god
 Of this new world ; at whose sight all the stars
 Hide their diminish'd heads ; to thee I call,
 But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
 O Sun ! to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
 That bring to my remembrance from what state
 I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere ;
 Till pride and worse ambition threw me down 40
 Warring in Heaven against Heaven's matchless King :
 Ah ! wherefore ? he deserv'd no such return
 From me, whom he created what I was

In that bright eminence, and with his good 44
Upbraided none ; nor was his service hard.
What could be less than to afford him praise,
The easiest recompence, and pay him thanks,
How due ! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,
And wrought but malice ; lifted up so high
I sdein'd subjection, and thought one step higher 50
Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
The debt immense of endless gratitude,
So burdensome still paying, still to owe,
Forgetful what from him I still receiv'd,
And understood not that a grateful mind
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
Indebted and discharg'd ; what burden then ?
O had his powerful destiny ordain'd
Me some inferiour Angel, I had stood
Then happy ; no unbounded hope had rais'd 60
Ambition ! Yet why not ? some other Power
As great might have aspir'd, and me, though mean,
Drawn to his part ; but other Powers as great
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within
Or from without, to all temptations arm'd.
Hadst thou the same free will and power to stand ?
Thou hadst : whom hast thou, then, or what to accuse,
But Heaven's free love dealt equally to all ?
Be then his love accurs'd, since love or hate,
To me alike, it deals eternal woe. 70
Nay, curs'd be thou ; since against his thy will
Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
Me miserable ! which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair ?
Which way I fly is Hell ; myself am Hell ;
And in the lowest deep, a lower deep
Still threatening to devour me opens wide,

To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heaven. 78
 O then at last relent : Is there no place
 Left for repentance, none for pardon left ?
 None left but by submission ; and that word
 Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
 Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduc'd
 With other promises and other vaunts
 Than to submit, boasting I could subdue
 The Omnipotent. Ay me ! they little know
 How dearly I abide that boast so vain,
 Under what torments inwardly I groan,
 While they adore me on the throne of Hell.
 With diadem and scepter high advanc'd 90
 The lower still I fall, only supreme
 In misery : Such joy ambition finds.
 But say I could repent, and could obtain,
 By act of grace, my former state ; how soon
 Would highth recall high thoughts, how soon unsay
 What feign'd submission swore ? Ease would recant
 Vows made in pain, as violent and void,
 For never can true reconciliation grow,
 Where wounds of deadly hate have pierc'd so deep :
 Which would but lead me to a worse relapse 100
 And heavier fall : so should I purchase dear
 Short intermission bought with double smart.
 This knows my Punisher ; therefore as far
 From granting he, as I from begging peace ;
 All hope excluded thus, behold, instead
 Of us outcast, exil'd, his new delight,
 Mankind created, and for him this world.
 So farewell hope ; and with hope farewell fear ;
 Farewell remorse ! all good to me is lost ;
 Evil, be thou my good ; by thee at least 110
 Divided empire with Heaven's King I hold,

By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign ; 112
As Man erelong, and this new world, shall know.

Thus while he spake, each passion dimm'd his face
Thrice chang'd with pale, ire, envy, and despair ;
Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd
Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld.

For heavenly minds from such distempers foul
Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,
Each perturbation smooth'd with outward calm, 120

Artificer of fraud ; and was the first
That practis'd falsehood under saintly show,
Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge :
Yet not enough had practis'd to deceive
Uriel once warn'd ; whose eye pursued him down

The way he went, and on the Assyrian mount
Saw him disfigur'd, more than could befall
Spirit of happy sort : His gestures fierce
He mark'd, and mad demeanour, then alone,
As he suppos'd, all unobserv'd, unseen. 130

So on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,
As with a rural mound, the champain head
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access denied ; and overhead up grew
Insuperable highth of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
A sylvan scene ; and, as the ranks ascend 140

Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
The verdurous wall of Paradise up sprung :
Which to our general sire gave prospect large
Into his nether empire neighbouring round.

And higher than that wall a circling row 146
 Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,
 Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
 Appear'd, with gay enamell'd colours mix'd :
 On which the sun more glad impress'd his beams
 Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
 When God hath shower'd the earth ; so lovely seem'd
 That landscape : And of pure now purer air
 Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
 Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
 All sadness but despair : Now gentle gales,
 Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
 Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
 Those balmy spoils. As when to them who sail
 Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past 160
 Mozambick,¹ off at sea north-east winds blow
 Sabeian odours from the spicy shore
 Of Araby the blest ; with such delay
 Well pleas'd they slack their course, and many a league
 Cheer'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles :
 So entertain'd those odorous sweets the Fiend,
 Who came their bane : though with them better pleas'd
 Than Asmodæus² with the fishy fume
 That drove him, though enamour'd, from the spouse
 Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent 170
 From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.

Now to the ascent of that steep savage hill
 Satan had journey'd on, pensive and slow ;
 But farther way found none, so thick entwin'd,
 As one continued brake, the undergrowth
 Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd
 All path of man, or beast that pass'd that way.

¹ 'Mozambique,' Straits of, dividing Madagascar from Africa.—² 'Asmodeus :'
see Tobit in Apocrypha.

One gate there only was, and that look'd east 178
On the other side : which when the arch-felon saw,
Due entrance he disdain'd ; and, in contempt,
At one slight bound high over-leap'd all bound
Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve
In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold :
Or as a thief, bent to unhoard the cash
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
Cross-barr'd and bolted fast, fear no assault, 190
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles ;
So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold ;
So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.
Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life,
The middle tree and highest there that grew,
Sat like a cormorant : yet not true life
Thereby regain'd, but sat devising death
To them who liv'd ; nor on the virtue thought
Of that life-giving plant, but only us'd
For prospect, what, well us'd, had been the pledge 200
Of immortality. So little knows
Any, but God alone, to value right
The good before him, but perverts best things
To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.

Beneath him, with new wonder now he views,
To all delight of human sense expos'd,
In narrow room, Nature's whole wealth ; yea more,
A Heaven on Earth : For blissful Paradise
Of God the garden was, by him in the east
Of Eden planted ; Eden stretch'd her line

From Auran¹ eastward to the royal towers 211
 Of great Seleucia,² built by Grecian kings,
 Or where the sons of Eden long before
 Dwelt in Telassar :³ In this pleasant soil
 His far more pleasant garden God ordain'd ;
 Out of the fertile ground he caus'd to grow
 All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste ;
 And all amid them stood the tree of life,
 High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
 Of vegetable gold ; and next to life, 220
 Our death, the tree of knowledge, grew fast by,
 Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.
 Southward through Eden went a river large,
 Nor chang'd his course, but through the shaggy hill
 Pass'd underneath ingulf'd, for God had thrown
 That mountain as his garden-mould high rais'd
 Upon the rapid current, which, through veins
 Of porous earth with kindly thirst updrawn,
 Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
 Water'd the garden ; thence united fell 230
 Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,
 Which from his darksome passage now appears,
 And now, divided into four main streams,
 Runs diverse, wandering many a famous realm
 And country, whereof here needs no account ;
 But rather to tell how, if Art could tell,
 How from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,
 Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
 With mazy error under pendant shades
 Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed 240
 Flowers worthy of Paradise, which not nice Art
 In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon

¹ 'Auran:' a city of Mesopotamia near Euphrates.—² 'Seleucia:' a city built by Seleucus on the Tigris.—³ 'Telassar:' a province in Babylonia.

Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain, 243
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierc'd shade
Imbrown'd the noontide bowers : Thus was this place
A happy rural seat of various view ;
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm,
Others whose fruit, burnish'd with golden rind,
Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true, 250
If true, here only, and of delicious taste :
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
Grazing the tender herb, were interpos'd ;
Or palmy hillock ; or the flowery lap
Of some irriguous valley spread her store,
Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose :
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant : meanwhile murmuring waters fall 260
Down the slope hills, dispers'd, or in a lake,
That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd
Her crystal mirrour holds, unite their streams.
The birds their quire apply ; airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
Led on the eternal Spring. Not that fair field
Of Enna,¹ where Proserpine gathering flow'rs,
Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis² 270
Was gather'd, which cost Ceres ail that pain
To seek her through the world ; nor that sweet grove
Of Daphne by Orontes, and the inspir'd
Castalian spring, might with this Paradise

¹ 'Enna,' 'Daphne,' 'Nyseian isle,' 'Amara : ' places in Sicily, or Greece, or Africa, famed among the ancients for their beauty.—² 'Dis : ' Pluto.

Of Eden strive ; nor that Nyseian isle 275
 Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
 Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Lybian Jove,
 Hid Amalthea, and her florid son,
 Young Bacchus, from his step-dame Rhea's eye ;
 Nor where Abassin¹ kings their issue guard, 280
 Mount Amara, though this by some suppos'd
 True Paradise under the Ethiop line
 By Nilus' head, enclos'd with shining rock,
 A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
 From this Assyrian garden, where the Fiend
 Saw, undelighted, all delight, all kind
 Of living creatures, new to sight, and strange.
 Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
 Godlike erect, with native honour clad
 In naked majesty seem'd lords of all : 290
 And worthy seem'd ; for in their looks divine
 The image of their glorious Maker shone,
 Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure.
 (Severe, but in true filial freedom plac'd,)
 Whence true authority in men ; though both
 Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd ;
 For contemplation he, and valour form'd ;
 For softness she, and sweet attractive grace ;
 He, for God only, she, for God in him :
 His fair large front, and eye sublime, declar'd 300
 Absolute rule ; and hyacinthine locks,
 Round from his parted forelock manly hung
 Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad.
 She, as a veil, down to the slender waist,
 Her unadorned golden tresses wore
 Dishevell'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd
 As the vine curls her tendrils, which implied

¹ ' Abassin : ' Abyssinian.

Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway, 308
And by her yielded, by him best receiv'd,
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,
And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay.
Nor those mysterious parts were then conceal'd ;
Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame
Of nature's works, honour dishonourable,
Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind
With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,
And banish'd from man's life his happiest life,
Simplicity and spotless innocence !
So pass'd they naked on, nor shunn'd the sight
Of God or Angel ; for they thought no ill : 320
So hand in hand they pass'd, the loveliest pair,
That ever since in love's embraces met ;
Adam the goodliest man of men since born
His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.
Under a tuft of shade that on a green
Stood whispering soft, by a fresh fountain-side
They sat them down ; and, after no more toil
Of their sweet gardening labour than suffic'd
To recommend cool Zephyr, and made ease
More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite 330
More grateful, to their supper-fruits they fell,
Nectarine fruits which the compliant boughs
Yielded them, sidelong as they sat recline
On the soft downy bank damask'd with flowers :
The savoury pulp they chew, and in the rind,
Still as they thirsted, scoop the brimming stream ;
Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles
Wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as beseems
Fair couple, link'd in happy nuptial league,
Alone as they. About them frisking play'd 340
All beasts of the earth, since wild, and of all chase

In wood or wilderness, forest or den ; 342
 Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw
 Dandled the kid ; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
 Gamboll'd before them ; the unwieldy elephant,
 To make them mirth, us'd all his might and wreath'd
 His lithe proboscis : close the serpent sly,
 Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine,
 His braided train, and of his fatal guile
 Gave proof unheeded ; others on the grass 350
 Couch'd, and, now fill'd with pasture gazing sat,
 Or bedward ruminating ; for the sun,
 Declin'd, was hasting now with prone career
 To the ocean isles, and in the ascending scale
 Of Heaven the stars that usher evening rose :
 When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,
 Scarce thus at length fail'd speech recover'd sad.

O Hell ! what do mine eyes with grief behold !
 Into our room of bliss thus high advanc'd
 Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps, 360
 Not Spirits, yet to heavenly Spirits bright
 Little inferiour ; whom my thoughts pursue
 With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
 In them divine resemblance, and such grace
 The hand that form'd them on their shape hath pour'd.
 Ah, gentle pair ! ye little think how nigh
 Your change approaches, when all these delights
 Will vanish, and deliver ye to woe ;
 More woe, the more your taste is now of joy ;
 Happy, but for so happy ill secur'd 370
 Long to continue, and this high seat your Heaven
 Ill fenc'd for Heaven to keep out such a foe
 As now is enter'd ; yet no purpos'd foe
 To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
 Though I unpitied : League with you I seek,

And mutual amity, so strait, so close, 376
That I with you must dwell, or you with me,
Henceforth : my dwelling haply may not please,
Like this fair Paradise, your sense ; yet such
Accept your Maker's work ; he gave it me,
Which I as freely give : Hell shall unfold,
To entertain you two, her widest gates,
And send forth all her kings ; there will be room,
Not like these narrow limits, to receive
Your numerous offspring ; if no better place,
Thank him who puts me loth to this revenge
On you who wrong me not for him who wrong'd.
And should I at your harmless innocence
Melt, as I do, yet publick reason just,
Honour and empire with revenge enlarg'd, 390
By conquering this new world, compels me now
To do what else, though damn'd, I should abhor.

So spake the Fiend, and with necessity,
The tyrant's plea, excus'd his devilish deeds.
Then, from his lofty stand on that high tree,
Down he alights among the sportful herd
Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,
Now other, as their shape serv'd best his end
Nearer to view his prey, and, unespied,
To mark what of their state he more might learn, 400
By word or action mark'd : About them round
A lion now he stalks with fiery glare ;
Then, as a tiger, who by chance hath spied
In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
Straight crouches close, then rising, changes oft
His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
Whence rushing he might surest seize them both,
Grip'd in each paw : when, Adam first of men,

To first of women, Eve, thus moving speech, 409
Turn'd him, all ear, to hear new utterance flow.

Sole partner, and sole part, of all these joys,
Dearer thyself than all ; needs must the Power
That made us, and for us this ample world,
Be infinitely good, and of his good
As liberal and free as infinite ;
That rais'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here
In all this happiness, who at his hand
Have nothing merited, nor can perform
Aught whereof He hath need ; He who requires 420
From us no other service than to keep
This one, this easy charge, of all the trees
In Paradise, that bear delicious fruit
So various, not to taste that only tree
Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life ;
So near grows death to life, whate'er death is,
Some dreadful thing no doubt ; for well thou know'st
God hath pronounc'd it death to taste that tree,
The only sign of our obedience left,
Among so many signs of power and rule
Conferr'd upon us, and dominion given 430
Over all other creatures that possess
Earth, air, and sea. Then, let us not think hard
One easy prohibition, who enjoy
Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
Unlimited of manifold delights :
But let us ever praise Him, and extol
His bounty, following our delightful task,
To prune these growing plants, and tend these flowers,
Which were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet.

To whom thus Eve replied. O thou for whom 440
And from whom, I was form'd, flesh of thy flesh,
And without whom am to no end, my guide

And head!—what thou hast said is just and right. 443
For we to Him indeed all praises owe,
And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy
So far the happier lot, enjoying thee,
Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou
Like consort to thyself canst nowhere find.
That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awak'd, and found myself repos'd 450
Under a shade on flowers, much wondering where,
And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound
Of waters issued from a cave, and spread
Into a liquid plain, then stood unmov'd,
Pure as the expanse of Heaven; I thither went
With unexperienc'd thought, and laid me down
On the green bank, to look into the clear
Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.
As I bent down to look, just opposite 460
A shape within the watery gleam appear'd
Bending to look on me: I started back,
It started back; but pleas'd I soon return'd,
Pleas'd it return'd as soon, with answering looks
Of sympathy and love: There I had fix'd
Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warn'd me; "What thou seest,
What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;
With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
And I will bring thee where no shadow stays 470
Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he
Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy
Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear
Multitudes like thyself, and thence be call'd
Mother of human race." What could I do,
But follow straight, invisibly thus led?

Till I espied thee, fair indeed and tall, 477
 Under a platane ; yet, methought, less fair,
 Less winning soft, less amiably mild,
 Than that smooth watery image : back I turn'd ;
 Thou following cry'dst aloud, " Return, fair Eve ;
 Whom fly'st thou ? whom thou fly'st, of him thou art,
 His flesh, his bone ; to give thee being I lent
 Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,
 Substantial life, to have thee by my side
 Henceforth an individual solace dear ;
 Part of my soul, I seek thee, and thee claim,
 My other half : " With that thy gentle hand
 Seiz'd mine : I yielded ; and from that time see
 How beauty is excell'd by manly grace, 490
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.

So spake our general mother, and with eyes
 Of conjugal attraction unprov'd,
 And meek surrender, half-embracing lean'd
 On our first father ; half her swelling breast
 Naked met his, under the flowing gold
 Of her loose tresses hid : he, in delight
 Both of her beauty, and submissive charms,
 Smil'd with superiour love, as Jupiter
 On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds 500
 That shed May flowers ; and press'd her matron lip
 With kisses pure : Aside the Devil turn'd
 For envy ; yet with jealous leer malign
 Ey'd them askance, and to himself thus plain'd.

Sight hateful, sight tormenting ! thus these two,
 Imparadis'd in one another's arms,
 The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
 Of bliss on bliss ; while I to Hell am thrust,
 Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
 Among our other torments not the least,

Still unfulfill'd with pain of longing pines. 511
Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd
From their own mouths : All is not theirs, it seems ;
One fatal tree there stands, of knowledge call'd,
Forbidden them to taste : Knowledge forbidden ?
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord
Envy them that ? Can it be sin to know ?
Can it be death ? And do they only stand
By ignorance ? Is that their happy state,
The proof of their obedience and their faith ? 520
O fair foundation laid whereon to build
Their ruin ! hence I will excite their minds
With more desire to know, and to reject
Envious commands, invented with design
To keep them low whom knowledge might exalt
Equal with gods : aspiring to be such,
They taste and die : What likelier can ensue ?
But first with narrow search I must walk round
This garden, and no corner leave unspied ;
A chance but chance may lead where I may meet 530
Some wandering Spirit of Heaven by fountain-side,
Or in thick shade retir'd, from him to draw
What farther would be learn'd. Live while ye may,
Ye happy pair : enjoy, till I return,
Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed.

So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,
But with sly circumspection, and began
Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale, his roam.
Meanwhile, in utmost longitude, where Heaven
With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun 540
Slowly descended, and, with right aspect,
Against the eastern gate of Paradise
Levell'd his evening rays : It was a rock
Of alabaster, pil'd up to the clouds,

Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent 545
 Accessible from earth, one entrance high;
 The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
 Still as it rose, impossible to climb.
 Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel¹ sat,
 Chief of the angelick guards, awaiting night; 550
 About him exercis'd heroick games
 The unarm'd youth of Heaven, but nigh at hand
 Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
 Hung high with diamond flaming and with gold.
 Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even
 On a sunbeam, swift as a shooting star
 In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fir'd
 Impress the air, and show the mariner
 From what point of his compass to beware
 Impetuous winds: He thus began in haste. 560

Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given
 Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place
 No evil thing approach or enter in.
 This day, at highth of noon, came to my sphere
 A Spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know
 More of the Almighty's works, and chiefly Man,
 God's latest image: I describ'd his way,
 Bent all on speed, and mark'd his aery gait;
 But, in the mount that lies from Eden north,
 Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks 570
 Alien from Heaven, with passions foul obscur'd:
 Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade
 Lost sight of him: One of the banish'd crew,
 I fear, hath ventur'd from the deep, to raise
 New troubles; him thy care must be to find.

To whom the winged warrior thus return'd.
 Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,

¹ 'Gabriel:' an archangel mentioned in Daniel, Luke, &c.

Amid the sun's bright circle where thou sitst, 578
See far and wide : In at this gate none pass
The vigilance here plac'd, but such as come
Well known from Heaven ; and since meridian hour
No creature thence : If Spirit of other sort,
So minded, have o'erleap'd these earthly bounds
On purpose, hard thou know'st it to exclude
Spiritual substance with corporeal bar :
But if within the circuit of these walks,
In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
Thou tell'st, by morrow dawning I shall know.

So promis'd he ; and Uriel to his charge
Return'd on that bright beam, whose point now rais'd 590
Bore him slope downward to the sun now fall'n
Beneath the Azores ;¹ whether the prime orb,
Incredible how swift, had hither roll'd
Diurnal, or this less volúbil earth,
By shorter flight to the east, had left him there,
Arraying with reflected purple and gold
The clouds that on his western throne attend.
Now came still Evening on, and Twilight gray
Had in her sober livery all things clad ;
Silence accompanied ; for beast and bird, 600
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale ;
She all night long her amorous descant sung ;
Silence was pleas'd : Now glow'd the firmament
With living sapphires : Hesperus, that led
The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon,
Rising in clouded majesty, at length
Apparent queen, unveil'd her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

¹ 'The Azores : ' nine islands in the Atlantic, sometimes called the Terceras, from Tercera the largest.

When Adam thus to Eve. Fair Consort, the hour
Of night, and all things now retir'd to rest, 611
Mind us of like repose ; since God hath set
Labour and rest, as day and night, to men
Successive ; and the timely dew of sleep,
Now falling with soft slumberous weight, inclines
Our eyelids: Other creatures all day long
Rove idle, unemploy'd, and less need rest :
Man hath his daily work of body or mind
Appointed, which declares his dignity,
And the regard of Heaven on all his ways ; 620
While other animals unactive range,
And of their doings God takes no account.
To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east
With first approach of light, we must be risen,
And at our present labour, to reform
Yon flow'ry arbours yonder alleys green,
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,
That mock our scant manuring, and require
More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth .
Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums, 630
That lie bestrown, unsightly and unsmooth,
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease ;
Meanwhile, as Nature wills, night bids us rest.

To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty adorn'd :
My Author and Disposer, what thou bidst
Unargued I obey : So God ordains ;
God is thy law, thou mine : To know no more
Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise.
With thee conversing I forget all time ;
All seasons, and their change, all please alike. 640
Sweet is the breath of Morn ; her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds : pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads

His orient beams on herb, tree, fruit, and flower, 644
Glistening with dew ; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers ; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful Evening mild ; then silent Night,
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of Heaven her starry train :
But neither breath of Morn when she ascends 650
With charm of earliest birds ; nor rising sun
On this delightful land ; nor herb, fruit, flower,
Glistening with dew ; nor fragrance, after showers ;
Nor grateful evening mild ; nor silent Night,
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,
Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet.
But wherefore all night long shine these ? For whom
This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes ?

To whom our general ancestor replied :
Daughter of God and Man, accomplish'd Eve, 660
These have their course to finish round the earth
By morrow evening, and from land to land
In order, though to nations yet unborn,
Ministering light prepar'd, they set and rise ;
Lest total Darkness should by night regain
Her old possession, and extinguish life
In Nature and all things ; which these soft fires
Not only enlighten, but, with kindly heat
Of various influence, foment and warm,
Temper or nourish, or in part shed down 670
Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow
On earth, made hereby apter to receive
Perfection from the sun's more potent ray.
These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,
Shine not in vain ; nor think, though men were none,
That Heaven would want spectators, God want praise :
Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth

Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep : 678
All these with ceaseless praise his works behold
Both day and night : How often from the steep
Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard
Celestial voices, to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to other's note,
Singing their Great Creator ? oft in bands
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds
In full harmonick number join'd, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven.

Thus talking, hand in hand alone they pass'd
On to their blissful bower : it was a place 690
Chosen by the Sovran Planter, when he framed
All things to Man's delightful use : the roof,
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade
Laurel, and myrtle, and what higher grew,
Of firm and fragrant leaf ; on either side
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,
Fenc'd up the verdant wall ; each beauteous flower,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin,
Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and wrought
Mosaick ; under foot the violet, 700
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broider'd the ground, more colour'd than with stone
Of costliest emblem : Other creature here,
Bird, beast, insect, or worm, durst enter none,
Such was their awe of Man. In shadier bower
More sacred and sequester'd, though but feign'd,
Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor Nymph
Nor Faunus haunted. Here, in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed ; 710
And heavenly choirs the hymenæan sung,

What day the genial Angel to our sire 712
 Brought her, in naked beauty more adorn'd,
 More lovely than Pandora,¹ whom the gods
 Endow'd with all their gifts, and O! too like
 In sad event, when to the unwiser son
 Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnar'd
 Mankind with her fair looks, to be aveng'd
 On him who had stole² Jove's authentick fire.

Thus, at their shady lodge arriv'd, both stood, 720
 Both turn'd, and under open sky ador'd
 The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven,
 Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,
 And starry pole: Thou also mad'st the night,
 Maker Omnipotent, and thou the day,
 Which we, in our appointed work employ'd,
 Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help
 And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss
 Ordain'd by thee; and this delicious place
 For us too large, where thy abundance wants 730
 Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.
 But thou hast promis'd from us two a race
 To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
 Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
 And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.

This said unanimous, and other rites
 Observing none, but adoration pure,
 Which God likes best, into their inmost bower
 Handed they went; and, eas'd the putting off
 These troublesome disguises which we wear, 740
 Straight side by side were laid; nor turn'd, I ween,
 Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites

¹ 'Pandora:' sent on earth to revenge the theft of Prometheus, married to Epimetheus, and dowered with a box, which, when opened by her husband, let loose all manner of evils on the world.—² 'Him who stole,' &c.: Prometheus.

Mysterious of connubial love refus'd : 743

Whatever hypocrites austere talk
Of purity, and place, and innocence,
Defaming as impure what God declares
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.
Our Maker bids encrease ; who bids abstain,
But our Destroyer, foe to God and man ?

Hail, wedded Love, mysterious law, true source 750
Of human offspring ; sole propriety
In Paradise of all things common else !

By thee adulterous Lust was driven from men
Among the bestial herds to range : by thee
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother, first were known.

Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets, 760

Whose bed is undefil'd and chaste pronounc'd,
Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs us'd.
Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
Reigns here and revels ; not in the bought smile
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendear'd,
Casual fruition ; nor in court amours,

Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
Or serenate, which the starv'd lover sings
To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain. 770

These, lull'd by nightingales, embracing slept,
And on their naked limbs the flowery roof
Shower'd roses, which the morn repair'd. Sleep on,
Blest pair ; and O ! yet happiest, if ye seek
No happier state, and know to know no more.

Now had Night measur'd¹ with her shadowy cone 776
 Half way up hill this vast sublunar vault,
 And from their ivory port the Cherubim,
 Forth issuing at the accustom'd hour, stood arm'd
 To their night-watches in warlike parade ;
 When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake.

Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the south
 With strictest watch ; these other wheel the north ;
 Our circuit meets full west. As flame they part,
 Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear.²
 From these, two strong and subtle Spirits he call'd
 That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge.

Ithuriel and Zephon, with wing'd speed
 Search through this garden, leave unsearch'd no nook ;
 But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge, 790
 Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.
 This evening from the sun's decline arriv'd,
 Who tells of some infernal Spirit seen
 Hitherward bent (who could have thought ?) escap'd
 The bars of Hell, on errand bad no doubt :
 Such, where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring.
 So saying, on he led his radiant files,
 Dazzling the moon : these to the bower direct,
 In search of whom they sought : Him there they found
 Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve, 800
 Assaying, by his devilish art to reach
 The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
 Illusions, as he list, phantasms and dreams ;
 Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
 The animal spirits, that from pure blood arise,
 Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise
 At least distemper'd discontented thoughts,

¹ ' Night measur'd,' &c. : i. e., it was about nine evening.—² ' To the shield,'
 ' to the spear : ' i. e., to right and left.

Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires, 808
 Blown up with high conceits ingendering pride.
 Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear
 Touch'd lightly ; for no falsehood can endure
 Touch of celestial temper, but returns
 Of force to its own likeness : Up he starts
 Discover'd and surpris'd. As when a spark
 Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid
 Fit for the tun some magazine to store
 Against a rumour'd war, the smutty grain,
 With sudden blaze diffus'd, inflames the air ;
 So started up, in his own shape the Fiend.
 Back stept those two fair Angels, half amaz'd 820
 So sudden to behold the grisly king ;
 Yet thus, unmov'd with fear, accost him soon.

Which of those rebel Spirits, adjudg'd to Hell,
 Com'st thou, escap'd thy prison ? and, transform'd,
 Why sat'st thou like an enemy in wait,
 Here watching at the head of these that sleep ?

Know ye not then, said Satan, fill'd with scorn,
 Know ye not me ? ye knew me once no mate
 For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar :
 Not to know me argues yourselves unknown, 830
 The lowest of your throng ; or, if ye know,
 Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
 Your message, like to end as much in vain ?

To whom thus Zephon, answering scorn with scorn.
 Think not, revolted Spirit, thy shape the same,
 Or undiminish'd brightness to be known,
 As when thou stood'st in Heaven upright and pure ;
 That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
 Departed from thee ; and thou resemblest now
 Thy sin and place of doom, obscure and foul. 840
 But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account

To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep 842
This place inviolable, and these from harm.

So spake the Cherub ; and this grave rebuke,
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace
Invincible : Abash'd the Devil stood,
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Virtue in her shape how lovely ; saw and pin'd
His loss ; but chiefly to find here observ'd
His lustre visibly impair'd ; yet seem'd 850
Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,
Best with the best, the sender, not the sent,
Or all at once ; more glory will be won,
Or less be lost. Thy fear, said Zephon bold,
Will save us trial what the least can do
Single against thee wicked, and thence weak.

The Fiend replied not, overcome with rage ;
But, like a proud steed rein'd, went haughty on,
Champing his iron curb : To strive or fly
He held it vain : awe from above had quell'd 860
His heart, not else dismay'd. Now drew they nigh
The western point, where those half-rounding guards
Just met, and closing stood in squadron join'd,
Awaiting next command. To whom their Chief,
Gabriel, from the front thus call'd aloud.

O friends ! I hear the tread of nimble feet
Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern
Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade :
And with them comes a third of regal port,
But faded splendour wan ; who by his gait 870
And fierce demeanour seems the Prince of Hell,
Not likely to part hence without contest ;
Stand firm, for in his look defiance lowers.

He scarce had ended, when those two approach'd,

And brief related whom they brought, where found, 875
How busied, in what form and posture couch'd.

To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake :
Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescrib'd
To thy transgressions, and disturb'd the charge
Of others, who approve not to transgress 880
By thy example, but have power and right
To question thy bold entrance on this place ;
Employ'd, it seems, to violate sleep, and those
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss ?

To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow.
Gabriel ! thou hadst in Heaven the esteem of wise,
And such I held thee ; but this question ask'd
Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain ?
Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,
Though thither doom'd ? Thou would'st thyself, no doubt,
And boldly venture to whatever place 891
Farthest from pain, where thou might'st hope to change
Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
Dole with delight, which in this place I sought ;
To thee no reason, who know'st only good,
But evil hast not tried : and wilt object
His will who bounds us ? Let him surer bar
His iron gates, if he intends our stay
In that dark durance : Thus much what was ask'd.
The rest is true—they found me where they say ; 900
But that implies not violence or harm.

Thus he in scorn. The warlike angel mov'd,
Disdainfully half smiling, thus replied.
O loss of one in Heaven, to judge of wise,
Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew,
And now returns him from his prison 'scaped,
Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither

Unlicens'd, from his bounds in Hell prescrib'd ; 909
So wise he judges it to fly from pain
However, and to 'scape his punishment !
So judge thou still, presumptuous ! till the wrath
Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight
Sevenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,
Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain
Can equal anger infinite provok'd.
But wherefore thou alone ? wherefore with thee
Came not all Hell broke loose ? Is pain to them
Less pain, less to be fled ; or thou than they
Less hardy to endure ? Courageous Chief ! 920
The first in flight from pain ! hadst thou alleg'd
To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.

To which the Fiend thus answer'd, frowning stern.
Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain,
Insulting Angel ! well thou know'st I stood
Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy aid
The blasting vollied thunder made all speed,
And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.
But still thy words at random, as before, 930
Argue thy inexperience what behoves
From hard assays and ill successes past
A faithful leader, not to hazard all
Through ways of danger, by himself untried :
I, therefore, I alone, first undertook
To wing the desolate abyss, and spy
This new created world, whereof in Hell
Fame is not silent, here in hope to find
Better abode, and my afflicted Powers
To settle here on earth, or in mid-air ; 940
Though for possession, put to try once more
What thou and thy gay legions dare against ;

Whose easier business were to serve their Lord 943
 High up in Heaven, with songs to hymn his throne,
 And practis'd distances to cringe, not fight.

To whom the warrior-Angel soon replied.
 To say and straight unsay, pretending first
 Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
 Argues no leader, but a liar trac'd,
 Satan ; and could'st thou faithful add ? O name, 950
 O sacred name of faithfulness profan'd !
 Faithful to whom ? to thy rebellious crew ?
 Army of Fiends, fit body to fit head.
 Was this your discipline and faith engag'd,
 Your military obedience, to dissolve
 Allegiance to the acknowledg'd Power supreme ?
 And thou, sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
 Patron of liberty, who more than thou
 Once fawn'd, and cring'd, and servilely ador'd
 Heaven's awful Monarch ? wherefore, but in hope 960
 To dispossess him, and thyself to reign ?
 But mark what I areed¹ thee now, Avant ;
 Fly thither whence thou fledst ! If, from this hour
 Within these hallow'd limits thou appear,
 Back to the infernal pit I drag thee chain'd,
 And seal thee so as henceforth not to scorn
 The facile gates of Hell too slightly barr'd.

So threaten'd he ; but Satan to no threats
 Gave heed, but waxing more in rage replied.

Then when I am thy captive talk of chains, 970
 Proud liminary Cherub ! but ere then
 Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
 From my prevailing arm, though Heaven's King
 Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,

¹ 'Areed : ' appoint, or decree.

Us'd to the yoke, draw'st his triumphant wheels 975
In progress through the road of Heaven star-pav'd.

While thus he spake, the angelic squadron bright
Turn'd fiery red, sharpening in mooned horns
Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
With ported¹ spears, as thick as when a field 980
Of Ceres, ripe for harvest, waving bends
Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
Sways them; the careful plowman doubting stands,
Lest on the threshing-floor his hopeful sheaves
Prove chaff. On the other side, Satan, alarm'd,
Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremov'd:
His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest
Sat Horror plum'd; nor wanted in his grasp
What seem'd both spear and shield: Now dreadful deeds 991
Might have ensued, nor only Paradise,
In this commotion, but the starry cope
Of Heaven perhaps, or all the elements
At least had gone to wrack, disturb'd and torn,
With violence of this conflict, had not soon
The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
Hung forth in Heaven his golden scales,² yet seen
Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign,
Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,
The pendulous round earth with balanc'd air 1000
In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
Battles and realms: In these he put two weights,
The sequel each of parting and of fight:
The latter quick up flew, and kick'd the beam;
Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the Fiend.

Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine;

¹ 'Ported:' a military term—*borne, pointed*.—² 'Golden scales:' the constellation Libra, or the Balance.

Neither our own, but given : What folly then 1007
To boast what arms can do ? since thine no more
Than Heaven permits, nor mine, though doubled now.
To trample thee as mire : For proof look up,
And read thy lot in yon celestial sign ;
Where thou art weigh'd, and shown how light, how weak,
If thou resist. The Fiend look'd up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft : Nor more ; but fled
Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night. 1015

BOOK V.

THE ARGUMENT.

Morning approached, Eve relates to Adam her troublesome dream; he likes it not, yet comforts her: they come forth to their day-labours: their morning hymn at the door of their bower. God, to render man inexcusable, sends Raphael to admonish him of his obedience, of his free estate, of his enemy near at hand, who he is, and why his enemy, and whatever else may avail Adam to know. Raphael comes down to Paradise; his appearance described; his coming discerned by Adam afar off, sitting at the door of his bower; he goes out to meet him, brings him to his lodge, entertains him with the choicest fruits of Paradise got together by Eve; their discourse at table: Raphael performs his message, minds Adam of his state and of his enemy; relates, at Adam's request, who that enemy is, and how he came to be so, beginning from his first revolt in heaven, and the occasion thereof; how he drew his legions after him to the parts of the north, and there incited them to rebel with him, persuading all but only Abdiel a seraph, who in argument dissuades and opposes him, then forsakes him.

Now Morn, her rosy steps in the eastern clime
Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam wak'd, so custom'd; for his sleep
Was aery-light, from pure digestion bred,
And temperate vapours bland, which the only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
Lightly dispers'd, and the shrill matin song
Of birds on every bough; so much the more
His wonder was to find unwaken'd Eve
With tresses discompos'd, and glowing cheek, 10
As through unquiet rest: He, on his side
Leaning half rais'd, with looks of cordial love
Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces; then, with voice

Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes, 16
Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus : Awake,
My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,
Heaven's last best gift, my ever new delight !
Awake : The morning shines, and the fresh field
Calls us ; we lose the prime, to mark how spring
Our tender plants, how blows the citron grove,
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
How nature paints her colours, how the bee
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet.

Such whispering wak'd her, but with startled eye
On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake.

O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,
My glory, my perfection ! glad I see
Thy face, and morn return'd : for I this night 30
(Such night till this I never pass'd) have dream'd,
If dream'd, not, as I oft am wont, of thee,
Works of day past, or morrow's next design,
But of offence and trouble, which my mind
Knew never till this irksome night : Methought
Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk
With gentle voice ; I thought it thine : it said,
" Why sleep'st thou, Eve ? now is the pleasant time,
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
To the night-warbling bird, that now awake 40
Tunes sweetest his love-labour'd song ; now reigns
Full-orb'd the moon, and with more pleasing light
Shadowy sets off the face of things ; in vain,
If none regard ; Heaven wakes with all his eyes,
Whom to behold but thee, Nature's desire ?
In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze."
I rose as at thy call, but found thee not ;
To find thee I directed then my walk ;

And on, methought, alone I pass'd through ways 50
That brought me on a sudden to the tree
Of interdicted knowledge : fair it seem'd,
Much fairer to my fancy than by day :
And, as I wondering look'd, beside it stood
One shap'd and wing'd like one of those from Heaven
By us oft seen ; his dewy locks distill'd
Ambrosia ; on that tree he also gaz'd ;
And " O fair plant," said he, " with fruit surcharg'd,
" Deigns none to ease thy load, and taste thy sweet,
" Nor god, nor man ? Is knowledge so despis'd ? 60
" Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste ?
" Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
" Longer thy offer'd good : why else set here ?"
This said, he paus'd not, but with venturous arm
He pluck'd, he tasted ; me damp horror chill'd
At such bold words vouch'd with a deed so bold :
But he thus, overjoy'd ; " O fruit divine,
" Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropt,
" Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit
" For gods, yet able to make gods of men : 70
" And why not gods of men ? since good, the more
" Communicated, more abundant grows,
" The author not impair'd, but honour'd more ?
" Here, happy creature, fair angelick Eve !
" Partake thou also ; happy though thou art,
" Happier thou may'st be, worthier can'st not be :
" Taste this, and be henceforth among the gods
" Thyself a goddess, not to earth confin'd,
" But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes
" Ascend to Heaven, by merit thine, and see 80
" What life the gods live there, and such live thou !"
So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
Even to my mouth of that same fruit held part

Which he had pluck'd : the pleasant savoury smell 84
 So quicken'd appetite, that I, methought,
 Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds
 With him I flew, and underneath beheld
 The earth outstretch'd immense, a prospect wide
 And various : Wondering at my flight and change
 To this high exaltation ; suddenly 90
 My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,
 And fell asleep ; but O, how glad I wak'd
 To find this but a dream ! Thus Eve her night
 Related, and thus Adam answer'd sad.

Best image of myself, and dearer half,
 The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep
 Affects me equally ; nor can I like
 This uncouth dream, of evil sprung, I fear ;
 Yet evil whence ? in thee can harbour none,
 Created pure. But know that in the soul 100
 Are many lesser faculties, that serve
 Reason as chief ; among these Fancy next
 Her office holds ; of all external things,
 Which the five watchful senses represent,
 She forms imaginations, aery shapes,
 Which Reason, joining or disjoining, frames
 All what we affirm or what deny, and call
 Our knowledge or opinion ; then retires
 Into her private cell, when Nature rests.
 Oft in her absence mimick Fancy wakes 110
 To imitate her ; but, misjoining shapes,
 Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams ;
 Ill matching words and deeds, long past or late.
 Some such resemblances, methinks, I find
 Of our last evening's talk, in this thy dream,
 But with addition strange ; yet be not sad.
 Evil into the mind of God or man

May come and go, so unapprov'd, and leave 118
No spot or blame behind : Which gives me hope
That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream,
Waking thou never wilt consent to do.
Be not dishearten'd then, nor cloud those looks,
That wont to be more cheerful and serene
Than when fair morning first smiles on the world ;
And let us to our fresh employments rise,
Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers,
That open now their choicest bosom'd smells,
Reserv'd from night, and kept for thee in store.

So cheer'd he his fair spouse, and she was cheer'd ;
But silently a gentle tear let fall 130
From either eye, and wip'd them with her hair ;
Two other precious drops that ready stood,
Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell
Kiss'd, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended.

So all was clear'd, and to the field they haste.
But first, from under shady arborous roof
Soon as they forth were come to open sight
Of day-spring, and the sun, who, scarce uprisen,
With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean-brim, 140
Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,
Discovering in wide landskip all the east
Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains,
Lowly they bow'd adoring, and began
Their orisons, each morning duly paid
In various style ; for neither various style
Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
Their Maker, in fit strains pronounc'd, or sung
Unmeditated ; such prompt eloquence
Flow'd from their lips, in prose or numerous verse,

More tunable than needed lute or harp 151

To add more sweetness ; and they thus began.

These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty ! Thine this universal frame,

Thus wonderous fair ; Thyself how wonderous then !

Unspeakable, who sit'st above these heavens

To us invisible, or dimly seen

In these thy lowest works ; yet these declare

Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.

Speak, ye who best can tell, ye sons of light, 160

Angels ; for ye behold him, and with songs

And choral symphonies, day without night,

Circle his throne rejoicing ; ye in Heaven.

On Earth join all ye Creatures to extol

Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.

Fairest of Stars, last in the train of night,

If better thou belong not to the dawn,

Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn

With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere,

While day arises, that sweet hour of prime. 170

Thou Sun, of this great world both eye and soul,

Acknowledge him thy greater ; sound his praise

In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st,

And when high noon hast gain'd, and when thou fall'st.

Moon, that now meet'st the orient sun, now fly'st

With the fix'd Stars, fix'd in their orb that flies ;

And ye five other wandering Fires, that move

In mystic dance not without song, resound

His praise who out of darkness call'd up light.

Air, and ye Elements, the eldest birth 180

Of Nature's womb, that in quaternion run

Perpetual circle, multiform ; and mix

And nourish all things ; let your ceaseless change

Vary to our Great Maker still new praise.

Ye Mists and Exhalations that now rise 185
From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,
Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
In honour to the world's Great Author rise ;
Whether to deck with clouds the uncolour'd sky,
Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers, 190
Rising or falling still advance his praise.
His praise, ye Winds, that from four quarters blow,
Breathe soft or loud ; and wave your tops, ye Pines,
With every plant, in sign of worship wave.
Fountains, and ye that warble, as ye flow,
Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
Join voices, all ye living Souls : Ye Birds,
That singing up to Heaven-gate ascend,
Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.
Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk 200
The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep ;
Witness if I be silent, morn or even,
To hill, or valley, fountain, or fresh shade,
Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.
Hail, Universal Lord, be bounteous still
To give us only good ; and, if the night
Have gather'd aught of evil, or conceal'd,
Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark !

So pray'd they innocent, and to their thoughts
Firm peace recover'd soon, and wonted calm. 210
On to their morning's rural work they haste,
Among sweet dewes and flowers ; where any row
Of fruit-trees over-woody reach'd too far
Their pamper'd boughs, and needed hands to check
Fruitless embraces : or they led the vine
To wed her elm ; she, spous'd, about him twines
Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
Her dower, the adopted clusters, to adorn

His barren leaves. Them thus employ'd beheld 219
 With pity Heaven's high King, and to him call'd
 Raphael, the sociable Spirit, that deign'd
 To travel with Tobias,¹ and secur'd
 His marriage with the seven times wedded maid.

Raphael, said he, thou hear'st what stir on Earth
 Satan, from Hell 'scaped through the darksome gulf,
 Hath rais'd in Paradise ; and how disturb'd
 This night the human pair ; how he designs
 In them at once to ruin all mankind.
 Go therefore, half this day as friend with friend
 Converse with Adam, in what bower or shade 230
 Thou find'st him, from the heat of noon retir'd
 To respite his day-labour with repast,
 Or with repose ; and such discourse bring on,
 As may advise him of his happy state,
 Happiness in his power left free to will,
 Left to his own free will, his will though free,
 Yet mutable ; whence warn him to beware
 He swerve not, too secure : Tell him withal
 His danger, and from whom ; what enemy,
 Late fallen himself from Heaven, is plotting now 240
 The fall of others from like state of bliss ;
 By violence ? no, for that shall be withstood ;
 But by deceit and lies : This let him know,
 Lest, wilfully transgressing, he pretend
 Surprisal, unadmonish'd, unforewarn'd.

So spake the Eternal Father, and fulfill'd
 All justice : Nor delay'd the winged Saint
 After his charge receiv'd ; but from among
 Thousand celestial Ardours, where he stood
 Veil'd with his gorgeous wings, upspringing light, 250
 Flew through the midst of Heaven : the angelick quires

¹ ' Tobias : ' see book of Tobit in Apocrypha.

On each hand parting, to his speed gave way 252
 Through all the empyreal road ; till, at the gate
 Of Heaven arriv'd, the gate self-open'd wide
 On golden hinges turning, as, by work
 Divine, the Sovran Architect had fram'd.
 From hence no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
 Star interpos'd, however small, he sees,
 Not unconform'd to other shining globes,
 Earth, and the garden of God, with cedars crown'd 260
 Above all hills. As when by night the glass
 Of Galileo, less assur'd, observes
 Imagin'd lands and regions in the moon :
 Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades
 Delos or Samos first appearing, kens
 A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight
 He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky
 Sails between worlds and worlds, with steady wing
 Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan
 Winnows the buxom air ; till, within soar 270
 Of towering eagles, to all the fowls he seems
 A phoenix,¹ gazed by all, as that sole bird,
 When, to enshrine his relics in the Sun's
 Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.
 At once on the eastern cliff of Paradise
 He lights, and to his proper shape² returns,
 A Seraph wing'd : Six wings he wore to shade
 His lineaments divine ; the pair that clad
 Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast,
 With regal ornament ; the middle pair 280
 Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
 Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
 And colours dipp'd in Heaven ; the third his feet

¹ 'Phoenix.' It is not meant that he assumed the form, but only that he appeared a phoenix.—² 'Proper shape : ' i. e., was seen in his true form.

Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail, 284
Sky-tinctur'd grain. Like Maia's son he stood,
And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill'd
The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands
Of Angels under watch ; and to his state,
And to his message high, in honour rise ;
For on some message high they guess'd him bound. 290
Their glittering tents he pass'd, and now is come
Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,
And flowering odours, cassia, nard, and balm ;
A wilderness of sweets ; for Nature here
Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will
Her virgin fancies pouring forth more sweet,
Wild above rule or art, enormous bliss.
Him through the spicy forest onward come
Adam discern'd, as in the door he sat
Of his cool bower, while now the mounted sun 300
Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm
Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs :
And Eve within, due at her hour, prepar'd
For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst
Of nectarous draughts between, from milky stream,
Berry or grape : to whom thus Adam call'd.

Haste hither, Eve, and, worth thy sight behold
Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape
Comes this way moving ; seems another morn 310
Risen on mid-noon ; some great behest from Heaven
To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe
This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
And, what thy stores contain, bring forth, and pour
Abundance, fit to honour and receive
Our heavenly stranger : Well we may afford
Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow

From large bestow'd, where Nature multiplies 318
 Her fertile growth, and by disburdening grows
 More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare.

To whom thus Eve. Adam, earth's hallow'd mould,
 Of God inspir'd! small store will serve, where store,
 All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;
 Save what by frugal storing firmness gains
 To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes:
 But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
 Each plant and juiciest gourd, will pluck such choice
 To entertain our Angel-guest, as he,
 Beholding, shall confess, that here on Earth
 God hath dispens'd his bounties as in Heaven. 330

So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste
 She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
 What choice to choose for delicacy best,
 What order, so contriv'd as not to mix
 Tastes not well join'd, inelegant, but bring
 Taste after taste, upheld with kindest change;
 Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
 Whatever Earth, all-bearing mother, yields
 In India East or West, or middle shore
 In Pontus¹ or the Punick² coast, or where 340
 Alcinous reign'd,³ fruit of all kinds, in coat
 Rough, or smooth rind, or bearded husk, or shell,
 She gathers, tribute large, and on the board
 Heaps with unsparing hand; for drink, the grape
 She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths⁴
 From many a berry, and from sweet kernels press'd
 She tempers dulcet creams; nor these to hold
 Wants her fit vessels pure; then strows the ground
 With rose and odours from the shrub unfum'd.

¹ 'Pontus:' part of Asia.—² 'Punick coast:' part of Africa.—³ 'Where Alcinous reign'd:' an island in the Ionian Sea, now called Corfu.—⁴ 'Meaths:' sweet drinks like mead.

Meanwhile our primitive greatsire, to meet 350
 His Godlike guest, walks forth without more train
 Accompanied than with his own complete
 Perfections; in himself was all his state,
 More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits
 On princes, when their rich retinue long
 Of horses led, and grooms besmear'd with gold,
 Dazzles the croud, and sets them all agape.
 Nearer his presence Adam, though not aw'd,
 Yet with submiss approach, and reverence meek,
 As to a superiour nature, bowing low, 360
 Thus said. Native of heaven, for other place
 None can than Heaven such glorious shape contain;
 Since, by descending from the thrones above,
 Those happy places thou hast deign'd a while
 To want, and honour these, vouchsafe with us
 Two only, who yet by sovran gift possess
 This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower
 To rest; and what the garden choicest bears
 To sit and taste, till this meridian heat
 Be over, and the sun more cool decline. 370

Whom thus the Angelick Virtue answer'd mild.
 Adam, I therefore came; nor art thou such
 Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
 As may not oft invite, though Spirits of Heaven,
 To visit thee; lead on, then, where thy bower
 O'ershades; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,
 I have at will. So to the sylvan lodge
 They came, that like Pomona's¹ harbour smil'd,
 With flowerets deck'd, and fragrant smells; but Eve,
 Undeck'd save with herself, more lovely fair 380
 Than Wood-Nymph, or the fairest goddess feign'd

¹ 'Pomona: ' goddess of fruit-trees.

Of three¹ that in mount Ida naked strove, 382
 Stood to entertain her guest from Heaven ; no veil
 She needed, virtue-proof ; no thought infirm
 Alter'd her cheek. On whom the angel, *Hail*
 Bestow'd, the holy salutation us'd
 Long after to blest Mary, second Eve.

Hail, Mother of Mankind, whose fruitful womb
 Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons,
 Than with these various fruits the trees of God 390
 Have heap'd this table ! Rais'd of grassy turf
 Their table was, and mossy seats had round,
 And on her ample square from side to side,
 All autumn pil'd, though spring and autumn here
 Danc'd hand in hand. A while discourse they hold ;
 Nor fear lest dinner cool ; when thus began
 Our author. Heavenly stranger, please to taste
 These bounties, which our Nourisher, from whom
 All perfect good, unmeasur'd out, descends,
 To us for food and for delight hath caus'd 400
 The earth to yield ; unsavoury food, perhaps,
 To spiritual natures : only this I know,
 That one Celestial Father gives to all.

To whom the Angel. Therefore what He gives
 (Whose praise be ever sung) to Man in part
 Spiritual, may of purest Spirits be found
 No ingrateful food : And food alike those pure
 Intelligential substances require,
 As doth your rational ; and both contain
 Within them every lower faculty 410
 Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
 Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
 And corporeal to incorporeal turn.

¹ 'Three : ' Venus, Juno, and Minerva, for the golden apple, given by Paris to Venus.

For know, whatever was created needs 414
To be sustain'd and fed : Of elements
The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,
Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires
Ethereal, and, as lowest first the moon ;
Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurg'd
Vapours not yet into her substance turn'd. 420
Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale
From her moist continent to higher orbs.
The sun that light imparts to all, receives
From all his alimantal recompence
In humid exhalations, and at even
Sups with the ocean. Though in Heaven the trees
Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
Yield nectar ; though from off the boughs each morn
We brush mellifluous dew, and find the ground
Cover'd with pearly grain : Yet God hath here 430
Varied his bounty so with new delights,
As may compare with Heaven ; and to taste
Think not I shall be nice. So down they sat,
And to their viands fell ; nor seemingly
The Angel, nor in mist, the common gloss
Of Theologians ; but with keen despatch
Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
To transubstantiate : What redounds, transpires
Through Spirits with ease ; nor wonder ; if by fire
Of sooty coal the empirick alchemist 440
Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,
As from the mine. Meanwhile at table Eve
Minister'd naked, and their flowing cups
With pleasant liquours crown'd : O innocence
Deserving Paradise ! if ever, then,
Then had the sons of God excuse to have been

Enamour'd at that sight ; but in those hearts 448
Love unlibidinous reign'd, nor jealousy
Was understood, the injur'd lover's hell.

Thus when with meats and drinks they had suffic'd,
Not burden'd nature, sudden mind arose
In Adam, not to let the occasion pass
Given him by this great conference to know
Of things above his world, and of their being
Who dwell in Heaven, whose excellence he saw
Transcend his own so far ; whose radiant forms,
Divine effulgence, whose high power, so far
Exceeded human : and his wary speech,
Thus to the empyreal minister he fram'd : 460

Inhabitant with God, now know I well,
Thy favour, in this honour done to Man ;
Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsaf'd
To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,
Food not of Angels, yet accepted so,
As that more willingly thou could'st not seem
At Heaven's high feasts to have fed : yet what compare ?

To whom the winged Hierarch replied.
O Adam, One Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return, 470
If not deprav'd from good, created all
Such to perfection, one first matter all,
Endu'd with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and, in things that live, of life ;
But more refin'd, more spirituous and pure,
As nearer to him plac'd, or nearer tending
Each in their several active spheres assign'd,
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
Proportion'd to each kind. So, from the root 479
Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
More aery, last the bright consummate flower

Spirits odórous breathes : flowers, and their fruit, 482
 Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd,
 To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
 To intellectual ; give both life and sense,
 Fancy and understanding ; whence the soul
 Reason receives, and reason is her being,
 Discursive or intuitive ; discourse
 Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,
 Differing but in degree, of kind the same. 490
 Wonder not then, what God for you saw good
 If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
 To proper substance. Time may come, when Men
 With Angels may participate, and find
 No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare ;
 And from these corporal nutriments perhaps
 Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
 Improv'd by tract of time, and wing'd, ascend
 Ethereal, as we ; or may, at choice,
 Here, or in heavenly Paradises, dwell ; 500
 If ye be found obedient, and retain,
 Unalterably firm his love entire,
 Whose progeny you are. Meanwhile enjoy
 Your fill what happiness this happy state
 Can comprehend, incapable of more.

To whom the patriarch of mankind replied.
 O favourable Spirit, propitious guest,
 Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
 Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set
 From center to circumference ; whereon, 510
 In contemplation of created things,
 By steps we may ascend to God. But say
 What meant that caution join'd, *If ye be found*
Obedient? Can we want obedience then
 To Him, or possibly his love desert,

Who form'd us from the dust and plac'd us here 516
Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
Human desires can seek or apprehend ?

To whom the Angel. Son of Heaven and Earth,
Attend ! That thou art happy, owe to God ;
That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,
That is, to thy obedience ; therein stand.

This was that caution given thee ; be advis'd.

God made thee perfect, not immutable ;

And good he made thee ; but to persevere

He left it in thy power ; ordain'd thy will

By nature free, not overrul'd by fate

Inextricable, or strict necessity :

Our voluntary service he requires,

Not our necessitated ; such with him

530

Finds no acceptance, nor can find ; for how

Can hearts, not free, be tried whether they serve

Willing or no, who will but what they must

By destiny, and can no other choose ?

Myself, and all the angelick host, that stand

In sight of God, enthron'd, our happy state

Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds ;

On other surety none : Freely we serve,

Because we freely love, as in our will

To love or not ; in this we stand or fall :

540

And some are fall'n, to disobedience fall'n,

And so from Heaven to deepest Hell ; O fall,

From what high state of bliss, into what woe !

To whom our great progenitor. Thy words

Attentive, and with more delighted ear,

Divine instructor, I have heard, than when

Cherubick songs by night from neighbouring hills

Aëreal music send : Nor knew I not

To be both will and deed created free ;

Yet, that we never shall forget to love 550
Our Maker, and obey Him whose command
Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts
Assur'd me, and still assure : Though what thou tell'st
Hath pass'd in Heaven, some doubt within me move,
But more desire to hear, if thou consent,
The full relation, which must needs be strange,
Worthy of sacred silence to be heard ;
And we have yet large day, for scarce the sun
Hath finish'd half his journey, and scarce begins
His other half in the great zone of Heaven. 560

Thus Adam made request ; and Raphaël,
After short pause assenting, thus began.

High matter thou enjoin'st me, O prime of men,
Sad task, and hard : For how shall I relate
To human sense the invisible exploits
Of warring Spirits ? how, without remorse,
The ruin of so many, glorious once
And perfect while they stood ? how last unfold
The secrets of another world, perhaps
Not lawful to reveal ? Yet, for thy good 570
This is dispens'd ; and what surmounts the reach
Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
By likening spiritual to corporeal forms,
As may express them best : though what if Earth
Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein
Each to other like, more than on earth is thought ?

As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild
Reign'd where these Heavens now roll, where Earth now rests
Upon her center pois'd ; when on a day
(For time, though in eternity, applied 580
To motion, measures all things durable
By present, past, and future,) on such day
As Heaven's great year brings forth, the empyreal host

Of Angels, by imperial summons call'd, 584
 Innumerable before the Almighty's throne
 Forthwith, from all the ends of Heaven, appear'd
 Under their Hierarchs in orders bright :
 Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanc'd,
 Standards and gonfalons¹ 'twixt van and rear
 Stream in the air, and for distinction serve 590
 Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees ;
 Or in their glittering tissues bear imblaz'd
 Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
 Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs
 Of circuit inexpressible they stood,
 Orb within orb, the Father Infinite,
 By whom in bliss imbosom'd sat the Son,
 Amidst as from a flaming mount, whose top
 Brightness had made invisible, thus spake.

Hear, all ye Angels, progeny of light, 600
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers ;
 Hear my decree, which unrevok'd shall stand.
 This day I have begot whom I declare
 My only Son, and on this holy hill
 Him have anointed, whom ye now behold
 At my right hand : your head I him appoint ;
 And by myself have sworn, to him shall bow
 All knees in Heaven, and shall confess him Lord :
 Under his great vicegerent reign abide
 United, as one individual soul, 610
 For ever happy : Him who disobeys,
 Me disobeys, breaks union, and that day
 Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
 Into utter darkness, deep ingulf'd, his place
 Ordain'd without redemption, without end.

So spake the Omnipotent, and with his words

¹ 'Gonfalons : ' flags, or streamers.

All seem'd well pleas'd ; all seem'd, but were not all.
That day, as other solemn days, they spent 618
In song and dance about the sacred hill ;
Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere
Of planets, and of fix'd, in all her wheels
Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
Eccentrick, intervold, yet regular,
Then most when most irregular they seem ;
And in their motions harmony divine
So smooths her charming tones, that God's own ear
Listens delighted. Evening now approach'd
(For we have also our evening and our morn,
We ours for change delectable, not need ;)
Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn 630
Desirous ; all in circles as they stood,
Tables are set, and on a sudden pil'd
With Angels' food, and rubied nectar flows
In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,
Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heaven.
On flowers repos'd, and with fresh flowerets crown'd,
They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortality and joy, secure
Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds 639
Excess, before the All-bounteous King, who shower'd
With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.
Now when ambrosial night, with clouds exhal'd
From that high mount of God, whence light and shade
Spring both, the face of brightest Heaven had chang'd
To grateful twilight, (for night comes not there
In darker veil,) and roseate dews dispos'd
All but the unsleeping eyes of God to rest ;
Wide over all the plain and wider far
Than all this globous earth in plain outspread,
(Such are the courts of God) the angelick throng,

Dispers'd in bands and files, their camp extend 651
 By living streams among the trees of life,
 Pavilions numberless, and sudden rear'd
 Celestial tabernacles, where they slept
 Fann'd with cool winds ; save those who, in their course,
 Melodious hymns about the sovran throne
 Alternate all night long : but not so wak'd
 Satan ; so call him now, his former name
 Is heard no more in Heaven ; he of the first,
 If not the first Arch-Angel, great in power, 660
 In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught
 With envy against the Son of God, that day
 Honour'd by his Great Father, and proclaim'd
 Messiah King anointed, could not bear
 Through pride that sight, and thought himself impair'd.
 Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain,
 Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour
 Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolv'd
 With all his legions to dislodge, and leave
 Unworshipt, unobey'd, the throne supreme, 670
 Contemptuous ; and his next subordinate ¹
 Awakening, thus to him in secret spake.

Sleep'st thou, Companion dear ? What sleep can close
 Thy eyelids ? and remember'st what decree
 Of yesterday, so late hath pass'd the lips
 Of Heaven's Almighty ? Thou to me thy thoughts
 Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont, to impart ;
 Both waking we were one ; how then can now
 Thy sleep dissent ? New laws thou seest impos'd :
 New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise
 In us who serve, new counsels to debate 681
 What doubtful may ensue : More in this place
 To utter is not safe. Assemble thou

¹ 'Next subordinate : ' Beelzebub.

Of all those myriads which we lead the chief ; 684
Tell them, that by command, ere yet dim night
Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
And all who under me their banners wave,
Homeward, with flying march, where we possess
The quarters of the north ; there to prepare
Fit entertainment to receive our King, 690
The great Messiah, and his new commands,
Who speedily through all the hierarchies
Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.

So spake the false Arch-Angel, and infus'd
Bad influence into the unwary breast
Of his associate : He together calls,
Or several one by one, the regent Powers,
Under him Regent ; tells, as he was taught,
That the Most High commanding, now ere night,
Now ere dim night had disencumber'd Heaven, 700
The great hierarchal standard was to move ;
Tells the suggested cause, and casts between
Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound
Or taint integrity : But all obey'd
The wonted signal and superiour voice
Of their great Potentate ; for great indeed
His name, and high was his degree in Heaven ;
His countenance, as the morning star that guides
The starry flock, allur'd them, and with lies
Drew after him the third part of Heaven's host. 710
Meanwhile the Eternal eye, whose sight discerns
Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
And from within the golden lamps that burn
Nightly before him, saw without their light
Rebellion rising ; saw in whom, how spread
Among the sons of morn, what multitudes

Were banded to oppose his high decree ; 717
And, smiling, to his only Son thus said :

Son, thou in whom my glory I behold
In full resplendence, Heir of all my might,
Nearly it now concerns us to be sure
Of our Omnipotence, and with what arms
We mean to hold what anciently we claim
Of deity or empire : Such a foe
Is rising, who intends to erect his throne
Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north ;
Nor so content, hath in his thought to try
In battle what our power is, or our right.
Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
With speed what force is left, and all employ 730
In our defence ; lest unawares we lose
This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.

To whom the Son, with calm aspect and clear,
Lightning divine, ineffable, serene,
Made answer. Mighty Father, thou thy foes
Justly hast in derision, and secure,
Laugh'st at their vain designs and tumults vain,
Matter to me of glory, whom their hate
Illustrates, when they see all regal power
Given me to quell their pride ; and in event 740
Know whether I be dextrous to subdue
Thy rebels, or be found the worst in Heaven.

So spake the Son ; but Satan, with his Powers,
Far was advanc'd on winged speed ; an host
Innumerable as the stars of night,
Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun
Impearls on every leaf and every flower.
Regions they pass'd, the mighty regencies
Of Seraphim, and Potentates, and Thrones,
In their triple degrees ; regions to which

All thy dominion, Adam, is no more 751
 Than what this garden is to all the earth,
 And all the sea, from one entire globose
 Stretch'd into longitude ; which having pass'd,
 At length into the limits of the north
 They came ; and Satan to his royal seat
 High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
 Rais'd on a mount, with pyramids and towers
 From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold ;
 The palace of great Lucifer, (so call 760
 That structure in the dialect of men
 Interpreted), which not long after, he
 Affecting all equality with God,
 In imitation of that mount whereon
 Messiah was declar'd in sight of Heaven,
 The Mountain of the Congregation¹ call'd ;
 For thither he assembled all his train,
 Pretending so commanded, to consult
 About the great reception of their King,
 Thither to come, and with calumnious art 770
 Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears.

Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers ;
 If these magnifick titles yet remain
 Not merely titular, since by decree
 Another now hath to himself engross'd
 All power, and us eclips'd, under the name
 Of King anointed, for whom all this haste
 Of midnight-march, and hurried meeting here,
 This only to consult how we may best,
 With what may be devis'd of honours new, 780
 Receive him coming to receive from us
 Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile !

¹ ' Mountain of Congregation : ' see Isaiah xiv. 13.

Too much to one ! but double how endur'd, 783
To one, and to his image now proclaim'd ?
But what if better counsels might erect
Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke ?
Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend
The supple knee ? Ye will not, if I trust
To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves
Natives and sons of Heaven possess'd before 790
By none ; and if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free ; for orders and degrees
Jar not with liberty, but well consist.
Who can in reason then, or right, assume
Monarchy over such as live by right
His equals, if in power and splendour less,
In freedom equal ? or can introduce
Law and edict on us, who without law
Err not ? much less for this to be our Lord,
And look for adoration, to the abuse 800
Of those imperial titles, which assert
Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve.

Thus far his bold discourse without controul
Had audience ; when among the Seraphim
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal ador'd
The Deity, and divine commands obey'd,
Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe
The current of his fury thus oppos'd.

O argument blasphemous, false, and proud !
Words which no ear ever to hear in Heaven 810
Expected, least of all from thee, Ingrate,
In place thyself so high above thy peers.
Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
The just decree of God, pronounc'd and sworn,
That to his only Son, by right endu'd
With regal scepter, every soul in Heaven

Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due 817
 Confess him rightful King ? unjust, thou say'st,
 Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
 And equal over equals to let reign,
 One over all with unsucceeded power.
 Shalt thou give law to God ? shalt thou dispute
 With him the points of liberty, who made
 Thee what thou art, and form'd the Powers of Heaven
 Such as he pleas'd, and circumscrib'd their being ?
 Yet, by experience taught, we know how good,
 And of our good and of our dignity
 How provident he is ; how far from thought
 To make us less, bent rather to exalt
 Our happy state, under one head more near 830
 United. But to grant it thee unjust,
 That equal over equals monarch reign :
 Thyself though great and glorious, dost thou count,
 Or all angelick nature join'd in one,
 Equal to him, begotten Son ? by whom,
 As by his Word, the mighty Father made
 All things, even thee ; and all the Spirits of Heaven
 By him created in their bright degrees,
 Crown'd them with glory, and to their glory named
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers, 840
 Essential Powers ; nor by his reign obscur'd,
 But more illustrious made ; since he the Head,
 One of our number thus reduc'd becomes ;
 His laws our laws ; all honour to him done
 Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,
 And tempt not these ; but hasten to appease
 The incensed Father and the incensed Son,
 While pardon may be found in time besought.

So spake the fervent Angel ; but his zeal
 None seconded, as out of season judg'd,

Or singular and rash : Whereat rejoiced 851
The Apostate, and, more haughty, thus replied :

That we were form'd then, say'st thou ? and the work
Of secondary hands, by task transferr'd
From Father to his Son ? strange point and new !
Doctrine which we would know whence learn'd : who saw
Whence this creation was ? remember'st thou
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being ?
We know no time when we were not as now ;
Know none before us, self-begot, self-rais'd 860
By our own quick'ning power, when fatal course
Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
Of this our native Heaven, ethereal sons.

Our puissance is our own ; our own right hand
Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try
Who is our equal : Then thou shalt behold
Whether by supplication we intend
Address, and to begirt the almighty throne
Beseeching or besieging. This report,
These tidings carry to the anointed King ; 870
And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.

He said ; and, as the sound of waters deep,
Hoarse murmur echoed to his words applause
Through the infinite host : nor less for that
The flaming Seraph, fearless though alone
Encompass'd round with foes, thus answer'd bold.

O alienate from God, O Spirit accurs'd,
Forsaken of all good ! I see thy fall
Determin'd, and thy hapless crew involv'd
In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread 880
Both of thy crime and punishment : Henceforth
No more be troubled how to quit the yoke
Of God's Messiah ; those indulgent laws
Will not be now vouchsaf'd ; other decrees

Against thee are gone forth without recall ; 885
That golden scepter, which thou didst reject,
Is now an iron rod to bruise and break
Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise ;
Yet not for thy advice or threats I fly
These wicked tents devoted, lest the wrath 890
Impendent, raging into sudden flame,
Distinguish not : For soon expect to feel
His thunder on thy head, devouring fire.
Then who created thee lamenting learn,
When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know.

So spake the Seraph Abdiel, faithful found
Among the faithless, faithful only he ;
Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
Unshaken, uneduc'd, untterrified,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal ; 900
Nor number, nor example, with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Though single. From amidst them forth he pass'd,
Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd
Superiour, nor of violence fear'd aught ;
And, with retorted scorn, his back he turn'd
On those proud towers to swift destruction doom'd.

BOOK VI

THE ARGUMENT.

Raphael continues to relate how Michael and Gabriel were sent forth to battle against Satan and his angels. The first fight described: Satan and his powers retire under night: he calls a council; invents devilish engines, which, in the second day's fight, put Michael and his angels to some disorder; but they at length, pulling up mountains, overwhelm both the force and machines of Satan: yet the tumult not so ending, God, on the third day, sends Messiah his Son, for whom he had reserved the glory of that victory: he, in the power of his Father, coming to the place, and causing all his legions to stand still on either side, with his chariot and thunder driving into the midst of his enemies, pursues them, unable to resist, towards the wall of heaven; which opening, they leap down with horror and confusion into the place of punishment prepared for them in the deep: Messiah returns with triumph to his Father.

ALL night the dreadless Angel, unpursued,
Through Heaven's wide champain held his way; till Morn,
Wak'd by the circling Hours, with rosy hand
Unbarr'd the gates of light. There is a cave
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne,
Where light and darkness, in perpetual round
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through Heaven
Grateful vicissitude, like day and night;
Light issues forth, and at the other door
Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour 10
To veil the heaven, though darkness there might well
Seem twilight here: And now went forth the Morn,
Such as in highest Heaven, array'd in gold
Empyreal; from before her vanish'd Night,
Shot through with orient beams; when all the plain,
Cover'd with thick embattled squadrons bright,
Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,
Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view:

War he perceiv'd, war in procinct ;¹ and found 19
 Already known what he for news had thought
 To have reported : Gladly then he mix'd
 Among those friendly Powers, who him receiv'd
 With joy and acclamations loud, that one,
 That of so many myriads fallen, yet one
 Return'd not lost. On to the sacred hill
 They led him high applauded, and present
 Before the seat supreme ; from whence a voice,
 From 'midst a golden cloud, thus mild was heard.

Servant of God, well done ; well hast thou fought
 The better fight, who single hast maintain'd, 30
 Against revolted multitudes, the cause
 Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms ;
 And for the testimony of truth hast borne
 Universal reproach, far worse to bear
 Than violence ; for this was all thy care,
 To stand approv'd in sight of God, though worlds
 Judg'd thee perverse : The easier conquest now
 Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,
 Back on thy foes more glorious to return,
 Than scorn'd thou didst depart ; and to subdue 40
 By force who reason for their law refuse,
 Right reason for their law, and for their King
 Messiah, who by right of merit reigns.

Go, Michael, of celestial armies prince,
 And thou in military prowess next,
 Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons
 Invincible ; lead forth my armed saints,
 By thousands and by millions, rang'd for fight,
 Equal in number to that godless crew
 Rebellious : Them with fire and hostile arms 50
 Fearless assault ; and, to the brow of Heaven

¹ 'Procinct : ' i. e., on the very point of beginning.

Pursuing, drive them out from God and bliss, 52
Into their place of punishment, the gulf
Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide
His fiery Chaos to receive their fall.

So spake the Sovran Voice, and clouds began
To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll
In dusky wreaths, reluctant flames, the sign
Of wrath awak'd ; nor with less dread the loud
Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow : 60
At which command the Powers militant
That stood for Heaven, in mighty quadrate join'd
Of union irresistible, mov'd on
In silence their bright legions, to the sound
Of instrumental harmony, that breath'd
Heroick ardour to adventurous deeds
Under their godlike leaders, in the cause
Of God and his Messiah. On they move
Indissolubly firm ; nor obvious hill,
Nor straitening vale, nor wood, nor stream, divides 70
Their perfect ranks ; for high above the ground
Their march was, and the passive air upbore
Their nimble tread ; as when the total kind
Of birds, in orderly array on wing,
Came summon'd over Eden to receive
Their names of thee ; so, over many a tract
Of Heaven they march'd, and many a province wide,
Tenfold the length of this terrene : At last,
Far in the horizon to the north appear'd
From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretch'd
In battailous aspect, and nearer view
Bristled with upright beams innumerable
Of rigid spears, and helmets throng'd, and shields
Various, with boastful argument portray'd,
The banded Powers of Satan, hasting on

With furious expedition ; for they ween'd 86
 That self-same day, by fight or by surprise,
 To win the mount of God, and on his throne
 To set the Envier of his state, the proud
 Aspirer ; but their thoughts prov'd fond and vain
 In the midway : Though strange to us it seem'd
 At first, that Angel should with Angel war,
 And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet
 So oft in festivals of joy and love
 Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire,
 Hymning the Eternal Father : But the shout
 Of battle now began, and rushing sound
 Of onset ended soon each milder thought.
 High in the midst, exalted as a god,
 The Apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat, 100
 Idol of majesty divine, enclos'd
 With flaming Cherubim, and golden shields ;
 Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now
 'Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,
 A dreadful interval, and front to front
 Presented stood in terrible array
 Of hideous length : Before the cloudy van,
 On the rough edge of battle ere it join'd,
 Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanc'd,
 Came towering, arm'd in adamant and gold ; 110
 Abdiel that sight endur'd not, where he stood
 Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,
 And thus his own undaunted heart explores.

O Heaven ! that such resemblance of the Highest
 Should yet remain, where faith and reäly
 Remain not : Wherefore should not strength and might
 There fail where virtue fails, or weakest prove
 Where boldest, though to sight unconquerable ?
 His puissance, trusting in the Almighty's aid,

I mean to try, whose reason I have tried 120
Unsound and false; nor is it aught but just
That he who in debate of truth hath won,
Should win in arms, in both disputes alike
Victor; though brutish that contest and foul,
When reason hath to deal with force, yet so
Most reason is that reason overcome.

So pondering, and from his armed peers
Forth stepping opposite, half-way he met
His daring foe, at this prevention more
Incens'd, and thus securely him defied. 130

Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reach'd
The highth of thy aspiring unoppos'd,
The throne of God unguarded, and his side
Abandon'd at the terrour of thy power
Or potent tongue: Fool! not to think how vain
Against the Omnipotent to rise in arms;
Who out of smallest things could, without end,
Have raised incessant armies to defeat
Thy folly; or, with solitary hand
Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow, 140
Unaided, could have finish'd thee, and overwhelm'd
Thy legions under darkness. But thou seest
All are not of thy train; there be who faith
Prefer, and piety to God, though then
To thee not visible, when I alone
Seem'd in thy world erroneous to dissent
From all: My sect thou seest; now learn too late
How few sometimes may know, when thousands err.

Whom the grand Foe, with scornful eye askance,
Thus answer'd. Ill for thee, but in wish'd hour 150
Of my revenge, first sought for, thou return'st
From flight, seditious Angel! to receive
Thy merited reward, the first assay

Of this right hand provok'd, since first that tongue, 154
Inspir'd with contradiction, durst oppose
A third part of the gods, in synod met
Their deities to assert; who, while they feel
Vigour divine within them, can allow
Omnipotence to none. But well thou com'st
Before thy fellows, ambitious to win 160
From me some plume, that thy success may show
Destruction to the rest: This pause between
(Unanswer'd lest thou boast), to let thee know
At first I thought that Liberty and Heaven
To heavenly souls had been all one; but now
I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
Ministering Spirits, train'd up in feast and song!
Such hast thou arm'd, the minstrelsy of heaven,
Servility with freedom to contend,
As both their deeds compar'd this day shall prove. 170

To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern replied.
Apostate! still thou err'st, nor end wilt find
Of erring. From the path of truth remote:
Unjustly thou depriv'st it with the name
Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains,
Or Nature: God and Nature bid the same,
When He who rules is worthiest, and excels
Them whom he governs. This is servitude,
To serve the unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee, 180
Thyself not free, but to thyself enthrall'd;
Yet lewdly dar'st our ministering upbraid.
Reign thou in Hell, thy kingdom; let me serve
In Heaven God ever blest, and his divine
Behests obey, worthiest to be obey'd:
Yet chains in Hell, not realms expect: Meanwhile,

From me return'd, as erst thou saidst, from flight, 187
This greeting on thy impious crest receive.

So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell
On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,
Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield,
Such ruin intercept : Ten paces huge
He back recoil'd ; the tenth on bended knee
His massy spear upstaid ; as if on earth
Winds under ground, or waters forcing way,
Sidelong had push'd a mountain from his seat,
Half sunk with all his pines. Amazement seiz'd
The rebel Thrones, but greater rage to see 199
Thus foil'd their mightiest ; ours joy fill'd, and shout,
Presage of victory, and fierce desire
Of battle : Whereat Michaël bid sound
The Arch-Angel trumpet ; through the vast of Heaven
It sounded, and the faithful armies rung
Hosanna to the Highest : Nor stood at gaze
The adverse legions, nor less hideous join'd
The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,
And clamour, such as heard in Heaven till now
Was never ; arms on armour clashing bray'd
Horrible discord, and the madding wheels 210
Of brazen chariots rag'd ; dire was the noise
Of conflict ; over head the dismal hiss
Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,
And flying vaulted either host with fire.
So under fiery cope together rush'd
Both battles main, with ruinous assault
And inextinguishable rage. All Heaven
Resounded ; and had Earth been then, all Earth
Had to her center shook. What wonder ? when

Millions of fierce encountering Angels fought 220
On either side, the least of whom could wield
These elements, and arm him with the force
Of all their regions; How much more of power
Army against army numberless to raise
Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb,
Though not destroy, their happy native seat;
Had not the Eternal King Omnipotent,
From his stronghold of Heaven, high overrul'd
And limited their might; though number'd such
As each divided legion might have seem'd
A numerous host; in strength each armed band
A legion; led in fight, yet leader seem'd 230
Each warrior, single, as in chief, expert
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway
Of battle, open when, and when to close
The ridges of grim war; No thought of flight,
None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
That argued fear; each on himself relied,
As only in his arm the moment lay
Of victory: Deeds of eternal fame 240
Were done, but infinite; for wide was spread
That war and various; sometimes on firm ground
A standing fight, then, soaring on main wing,
Tormented all the air; all air seem'd then
Conflicting fire. Long time in even scale
The battle hung; till Satan, who that day
Prodigious power had shown, and met in arms
No equal, ranging through the dire attack
Of fighting Seraphim confus'd, at length
Saw where the sword of Michael smote and fell'd 250
Squadrons at once; with huge two-handed sway
Brandish'd aloft, the horrid edge came down
Wide-wasting; such destruction to withstand

He hasted, and oppos'd the rocky orb 254
Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield,
A vast circumference. At his approach
The great Arch-Angel from his warlike toil
Surceas'd, and glad, as hoping here to end
Intestine war in Heaven, the arch-foe subdu'd
Or captive dragg'd in chains, with hostile frown 260
And visage all inflam'd first thus began.

Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,
Unnam'd in Heaven, now plenteous as thou seest
These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,
Though heaviest by just measure on thyself
And thy adherents: How hast thou disturb'd
Heaven's blessed peace, and into nature brought
Misery, uncreated till the crime
Of thy rebellion! how hast thou instill'd
Thy malice into thousands, once upright 270
And faithful, now prov'd false! But think not here
To trouble holy rest: Heaven casts thee out
From all her confines. Heaven, the seat of bliss,
Brooks not the works of violence and war.
Hence then, and evil go with thee along,
Thy offspring, to the place of evil, Hell;
Thou and thy wicked crew! there mingle broils,
Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,
Or some more sudden vengeance, wing'd from God,
Precipitate thee with augmented pain. 280

So spake the Prince of Angels; to whom thus
The Adversary: Nor think thou with wind
Of aëry threats to awe whom yet with deeds
Thou canst not. Hast thou turn'd the least of these
To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise
Unvanquish'd, easier to transact with me
That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats

To chase me hence? err not, that so shall end 288
 The strife which thou call'st evil, but we style
 The strife of glory; which we mean to win,
 Or turn this Heaven itself into the Hell
 Thou fablest: here, however, to dwell free,
 If not to reign: Meanwhile thy utmost force,
 And join him nam'd Almighty to thy aid,
 I fly not, but have sought thee far and nigh.

They ended parle, and both address'd for fight
 Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue
 Of Angels, can relate, or to what things
 Liken on earth conspicuous, that may lift
 Human imagination to such highth 300
 Of Godlike power? for likest Gods they seem'd,
 Stood they or mov'd, in stature, motion, arms,
 Fit to decide the empire of great Heaven.
 Now wav'd their fiery swords, and in the air
 Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields
 Blaz'd opposite, while Expectation stood
 In horror: From each hand with speed retir'd
 Where erst was thickest fight, the angelick throng,
 And left large field, unsafe within the wind
 Of such commotion; such as to set forth 310
 Great things by small, if, nature's concord broke,
 Among the constellations war were sprung,
 Two planets, rushing from aspect malign
 Of fiercest opposition, in mid sky
 Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound.
 Together both with next to almighty arm
 Uplifted imminent, one stroke they aim'd
 That might determine, and not need repeat,
 As not of power at once; nor odds appear'd
 In might or swift prevention: But the sword 320
 Of Michael from the armoury of God

Was given him temper'd so, that neither keen 322
Nor solid might resist that edge: it met
The sword of Satan, with steep force to smite
Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor staid,
But, with swift wheel reverse, deep entering shar'd
All his right side: Then Satan first knew pain,
And writh'd him to and fro convolv'd; so sore
The griding¹ sword with discontinuous² wound
Pass'd through him: But the ethereal substance clos'd,
Not long divisible; and from the gash 331
A stream of nectarous humour issuing flow'd
Sanguine, such as celestial Spirits may bleed,
And all his armour stain'd, erewhile so bright.
Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run
By Angels many and strong, who interpos'd
Defence, while others bore him on their shields
Back to his chariot, where it stood retir'd
From off the files of war: There they him laid
Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and shame, 340
To find himself not matchless, and his pride
Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath
His confidence to equal God in power.
Yet soon he heal'd; for Spirits that live throughout
Vital in every part, not as frail man
In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins,
Cannot but by annihilating die;
Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
Receive, no more than can the fluid air:
All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear, 350
All intellect, all sense; and, as they please,
They limb themselves, and colour, shape, or size
Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.

¹ 'Gridding:' cutting.—² 'Discontinuous:' separating the continuity of the parts.

Meanwhile, in other parts, like deeds deserv'd 354
 Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought,
 And with fierce ensigns pierc'd the deep array
 Of Moloch, furious king; who him defied,
 And at his chariot-wheels to drag him bound
 Threaten'd, nor from the Holy One of Heaven
 Refrain'd his tongue blasphemous; but anon 360
 Down cloven to the waist, with shatter'd arms
 And uncouth pain fled bellowing. On each wing
 Uriel and Raphaël, his vaunting foe,
 Though huge and in a rock of diamond arm'd,
 Vanquish'd Adramelech and Asmadai,¹
 Two potent Thrones, that to be less than gods
 Disdain'd, but meaner thoughts learn'd in their flight,
 Mangled with ghastly wounds through plate and mail.
 Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy
 The atheist crew, but with redoubled blow 370
 Ariel, and Arioch, and the violence
 Of Ramiel scorch'd and blasted, overthrew.
 I might relate of thousands, and their names
 Eternize here on earth; but those elect
 Angels, contented with their fame in heaven,
 Seek not the praise of men: The other sort,
 In might though wonderous and in acts of war,
 Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom
 Cancell'd from heaven and sacred memory,
 Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell, 380
 For strength, from truth divided and from just,
 Illaudable, nought merits but dispraise
 And ignominy; yet to glory aspires
 Vain-glorious, and through infamy seeks fame:
 Therefore eternal silence be their doom.

And now, their mightiest quell'd, the battle swerv'd,

¹ 'Adramelech,' 'Asmadai' idols afterwards of Samaria.

With many an inroad gor'd ; deformed rout 387
Enter'd, and foul disorder ; all the ground
With shiver'd armour strown, and on a heap
Chariot and charioteer lay overturn'd,
And fiery-foaming steeds ; what stood, recoil'd
O'er-wearied, through the faint Satanick host
Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surpris'd,
Then first with fear surpris'd, and sense of pain,
Fled ignominious, to such evil brought
By sin of disobedience ; till that hour
Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
Far otherwise the inviolable Saints,
In cubick phalanx firm, advanc'd entire,
Invulnerable, impenetrably arm'd ; 400
Such high advantages their innocence
Gave them above their foes, not to have sinn'd,
Not to have disobey'd : in fight they stood
Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pain'd
By wound, though from their place by violence mov'd.

Now Night her course began, and, over Heaven
Inducing darkness, grateful truce impos'd,
And silence on the odious din of war :
Under her cloudy covert both retir'd,
Victor and vanquish'd : On the foughten field 410
Michaël and his Angels prevalent
Encamping, plac'd in guard their watches round,
Cherubick waving fires : On the other part,
Satan with his rebellious disappear'd,
Far in the dark dislodged ; and, void of rest,
His potentates to council call'd by night ;
And in the midst thus undismay'd began :

O now in danger tried, now known in arms
Not to be overpower'd, Companions dear,
Found worthy not of liberty alone,

Too mean pretence ! but, what we more affect, 421
 Honour, dominion, glory, and renown ;
 Who have sustain'd one day in doubtful fight
 (And if one day, why not eternal days?)
 What Heaven's Lord had powerfulest to send
 Against us from about his throne, and judg'd
 Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
 But proves not so : Then fallible, it seems,
 Of future we may deem him, though till now
 Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly arm'd, 430
 Some disadvantage we endur'd and pain,
 Till now not known, but, known, as soon contemn'd ;
 Since now we find this our empyreal form
 Incapable of mortal injury,
 Imperishable, and, though pierc'd with wound,
 Soon closing, and by native vigour heal'd.
 Of evil then so small as easy think
 The remedy ; perhaps more valid arms,
 Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
 May serve to better us, and worse our foes, 440
 Or equal what between us made the odds,
 In nature none : If other hidden cause
 Left them superiour, while we can preserve
 Unhurt our minds, and understanding sound,
 Due search and consultation will disclose.

He sat ; and in the assembly next upstood
 Nisroch,¹ of Principalities the prime ;
 As one he stood escap'd from cruel fight,
 Sore toil'd, his riven arms to havock hewn,
 And, cloudy in aspect, thus answering spake. 450

Deliverer from new lords, leader to free
 Enjoyment of our rights as gods ; yet hard
 For gods, and too unequal work we find,

¹ 'Nisroch : ' god of the Assyrians ; see 2 Kings xix. 37.

Against unequal arms to fight in pain, 454
Against unpain'd, impassive ; from which evil
Ruin must needs ensue : for what avails
Valour or strength, though matchless, quell'd with pain
Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands
Of mightiest ? Sense of pleasure we may well
Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine, 460
But live content, which is the calmest life :
But pain is perfect misery, the worst
Of evils, and, excessive, overturns
All patience. He who therefore can invent
With what more forcible we may offend
Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves
No less than for deliverance what we owe.

Whereto, with look compos'd, Satan replied :
Not uninvented that, which thou aright 470
Believ'st so main to our success, I bring.
Which of us who beholds the bright surface
Of this ethereous mould whereon we stand,
This continent of spacious Heaven, adorn'd
With plant, fruit, flower ambrosial, gems, and gold ;
Whose eye so superficially surveys
These things, as not to mind from whence they grow
Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,
Of spiritous and fiery spume, till, touch'd
With Heaven's ray, and temper'd, they shoot forth 480
So beauteous, opening to the ambient light ?
These in their dark nativity the deep
Shall yield us, pregnant with infernal flame ;
Which, into hollow engines, long and round,
Thick-ramm'd, at the other bore with touch of fire
Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth
From far, with thundering noise, among our foes,

Such implements of mischief, as shall dash 488
 To pieces, and o'erwhelm whatever stands
 Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarm'd
 The Thunderer of his only dreaded bolt.
 Nor long shall be our labour ; yet ere dawn,
 Effect shall end our wish. Meanwhile revive ;
 Abandon fear ; to strength and counsel join'd
 Think nothing hard, much less to be despair'd.

He ended, and his words their drooping cheer
 Enlighten'd, and their languish'd hope reviv'd.
 The invention all admir'd, and each how he
 To be the inventor miss'd ; so easy it seem'd 499
 Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought
 Impossible : Yet, haply, of thy race
 In future days, if malice should abound,
 Some one intent on mischief, or inspir'd
 With devilish machination, might devise
 Like instrument to plague the sons of men
 For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.
 Forthwith from council to the work they flew ;
 None arguing stood ; innumerable hands
 Were ready ; in a moment up they turn'd
 Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath 510
 The originals of nature in their crude
 Conception : sulphurous and nitrous foam
 They found, they mingled, and with subtle art,
 Concocted and adjusted, they reduc'd
 To blackest grain, and into store convey'd :
 Part hidden veins digg'd up (nor hath this earth
 Entrails unlike) of mineral and stone,
 Whereof to found their engines and their balls
 Of missive ruin ; part incentive reed
 Provide, pernicious, with one touch of fire. 520
 So all ere day-spring, under conscious night

Secret they finish'd, and in order set, 522
With silent circumspection, unespied.

Now when fair morn orient in Heaven appear'd,
Up rose the Victor-Angels, and to arms
The matin trumpet sung : In arms they stood
Of golden panoply, refulgent host,
Soon banded : others from the dawning hills
Look round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour,
Each quarter to descry the distant foe, 530
Where lodg'd, or whither fled, or if for fight,
In motion or in halt : Him soon they met
Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in slow
But firm battallion : back with speediest sail
Zophiel,¹ of Cherubim the swiftest wing,
Came flying, and in mid-air aloud thus cried.

Arm, Warriours, arm for fight ; the foe at hand,
Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
This day ; fear not his flight ; so thick a cloud
He comes, and settled in his face I see 540
Sad resolution, and secure : Let each
His adamantine coat gird well, and each
Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orbed shield,
Borne even or high ; for this day will pour down,
If I conjecture aught, no drizzling shower,
But rattling storms of arrows barb'd with fire.

So warn'd he them, aware themselves, and soon
In order, quit of all impediment ;
Instant without disturb they took alarm,
And onward mov'd embattled : When, behold ! 550
Not distant far with heavy pace the foe
Approaching gross and huge, in hollow cube
Training his devilish enginery, impal'd
On every side with shadowing squadrons deep

¹ 'Zophiel : ' meaning in Hebrew, *the Spy of God*.

To hide the fraud. At interview both stood 555
A while ; but suddenly at head appear'd
Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud.

Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold ;
That all may see who hate us, how we seek
Peace and composure, and, with open breast, 560
Stand ready to receive them, if they like
Our overture, and turn not back perverse :
But that I doubt ; however, witness Heaven !
Heaven, witness thou anon ! while we discharge
Freely our part : ye, who appointed stand,
Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch
What we propound, and loud that all may hear !

So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce
Had ended ; when to right and left the front
Divided, and to either flank retir'd : 570
Which to our eyes discover'd, new and strange,
A triple mounted row of pillars laid
On wheels (for like to pillars most they seem'd,
Or hollow'd bodies made of oak or fir,
With branches lopt, in wood or mountain fell'd,)
Brass, iron, stony mould, had not their mouths
With hideous orifice gaped on us wide,
Portending hollow truce : At each behind
A Seraph stood, and in his hand a reed
Stood waving tipt with fire ; while we, suspense, 580
Collected stood, within our thoughts amus'd,
Not long ; for sudden all at once their reeds
Put forth, and to a narrow vent applied
With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame,
But soon obscur'd with smoke, all Heaven appear'd,
From those deep-throated engines belch'd, whose roar
Embowell'd with outrageous noise the air,
And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul

Their devilish glut, chain'd thunderbolts and hail 589
Of iron globes ; which, on the victor host
Levell'd, with such impetuous fury smote,
That, whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,
Though standing else as rocks, but down they fell
By thousands, Angel on Arch-Angel roll'd ;
The sooner for their arms ; unarm'd they might
Have easily, as Spirits, evaded swift
By quick contraction or remove ; but now
Foul dissipation follow'd, and forced rout ;
Nor serv'd it to relax their serried files.
What should they do ? if on they rush'd, repulse 600
Repeated, and indecent overthrow
Doubled, would render them yet more despis'd,
And to their foes a laughter ; for in view
Stood rank'd of Seraphim another row,
In posture to displode their second tire
Of thunder : Back defeated to return
They worse abhorr'd. Satan beheld their plight,
And to his mates thus in derision call'd :

O Friends ! why come not on these victors proud ?
Erewhile they fierce were coming ; and when we, 610
To entertain them fair with open front
And breast (what could we more ?) propounded terms
Of composition, straight they chang'd their minds,
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
As they would dance ; yet for a dance they seem'd
Somewhat extravagant and wild ; perhaps
For joy of offer'd peace : But I suppose,
If our proposals once again were heard,
We should compel them to a quick result.

To whom thus Belial, in like gamesome mood. 620
Leader ! the terms we sent were terms of weight,
Of hard contents, and full of force urg'd home ;

Such as we might perceive amus'd them all, 623
And stumbled many : Who receives them right,
Had need from head to foot well understand ;
Not understood, this gift they have besides,
They show us when our foes walk not upright.

So they among themselves in pleasant vein
Stood scoffing, highten'd in their thoughts beyond
All doubt of victory : Eternal Might 630
To match with their inventions they presum'd
So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
And all his host derided, while they stood
A while in trouble : But they stood not long ;
Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms
Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.
Forthwith (behold the excellence, the power,
Which God hath in his mighty Angels plac'd !)
Their arms away they threw, and to the hills
(For Earth had this variety from Heaven 640
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale,)
Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew ;
From their foundations loosening to and fro,
They pluck'd the seated hills, with all their load,
Rocks, waters, woods, and, by the shaggy tops
Uplifting, bore them in their hands : Amaze,
Be sure, and terrour seiz'd the rebel host,
When, coming towards them so dread they saw
The bottom of the mountains upward turn'd ;
Till on those cursed engines' triple row 650
They saw them whelm'd, and all their confidence,
Under the weight of mountains buried deep ;
Themselves invaded next, and on their heads
Main promontories flung, which in the air
Came shadowing, and oppress'd whole legions arm'd ;
Their armour help'd their harm, crush'd in and bruis'd

Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain 657
Implacable, and many a dolorous groan;
Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind
Out of such prison, though Spirits of purest light,
Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.

The rest, in imitation, to like arms
Betook them, and the neighbouring hills uptore :
So hills amid the air encounter'd hills,
Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire :
That underground they fought in dismal shade ;
Infernal noise ! war seem'd a civil game
To this uproar ; horrid confusion heap'd
Upon confusion rose : And now all Heaven
Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread ; 670
Had not the Almighty Father, where he sits
Shrin'd in his sanctuary of Heaven secure,
Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
This tumult, and permitted all, advis'd :
That his great purpose he might so fulfil,
To honour his anointed Son aveng'd
Upon his enemies, and to declare
All power on him transferr'd : Whence to his Son,
The Assessour¹ of his throne, he thus began.

Effulgence of my glory, Son belov'd, 680
Son, in whose face invisible is beheld
Visibly, what by Deity I am ;
And in whose hand what by decree I do,
Second Omnipotence ! two days are past,
Two days, as we compute the days of Heaven,
Since Michael and his powers went forth to tame
These disobedient : Sore hath been their fight,
As likeliest was, when two such foes met arm'd ;
For to themselves I left them ; and thou know'st

* ' Assessour : ' i. e., seated with him on the throne.

Equal in their creation they were form'd, 690
 Save what sin hath impair'd ; which yet hath wrought
 Insensibly, for I suspend their doom ;
 Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
 Endless, and no solution will be found :
 War wearied hath perform'd what war can do,
 And to disorder'd rage let loose the reins,
 With mountains, as with weapons, arm'd ; which makes
 Wild work in Heaven, and dangerous to the main.
 Two days are therefore past, the third is thine :
 For thee I have ordain'd it, and thus far 700
 Have suffer'd, that the glory may be thine
 Of ending this great war, since none but Thou
 Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
 Immense I have transfus'd, that all may know
 In Heaven and Hell thy power above compare ;
 And, this perverse commotion govern'd thus,
 To manifest Thee worthiest to be Heir
 Of all things ; to be Heir, and to be King
 By sacred unction, thy deserved right.
 Go then, Thou Mightiest, in thy Father's might ; 710
 Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
 That shake Heaven's basis, bring forth all my war,
 My bow and thunder, my almighty arms
 Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh ;
 Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out
 From all Heaven's bounds into the utter deep :
 There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
 God, and Messiah his anointed King.

He said, and on his Son with rays direct
 Shone full : he all his Father full express'd 720
 Ineffably into his face receiv'd ;
 And thus the Filial Godhead answering spake.

O Father, O Supreme of heavenly Thrones,

First, Highest, Holiest, Best ; thou always seek'st 724
To glorify thy Son, I always thee,
As is most just : This I my glory account,
My exaltation, and my whole delight,
That thou, in me well pleas'd, declar'st thy will
Fulfill'd, which to fulfil is all my bliss.

Scepter and power, thy giving, I assume, 730
And gladlier shall resign, when in the end
Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee
For ever ; and in me all whom thou lov'st :
But whom thou hat'st, I hate, and can put on
Thy terrours, as I put thy mildness on,
Image of thee in all things ; and shall soon,
Arm'd with thy might, rid Heaven of these rebell'd ;
To their prepar'd ill mansion driven down,
To chains of darkness, and the undying worm ;
That from thy just obedience could revolt, 740
Whom to obey is happiness entire.

Then shall thy Saints unmix'd, and from the impure
Far separate, circling thy holy mount,
Unfeigned Halleluiahs to thee sing,
Hymns of high praise, and I among them Chief.

So said, he, o'er his scepter bowing, rose
From the right hand of Glory where he sat ;
And the third sacred morn began to shine,
Dawning through Heaven. Forth rush'd with whirlwind sound
The chariot of Paternal Deity, 750
Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
Itself instinct with Spirit, but convoy'd
By four Cherubick shapes : four faces each
Had wonderous ; as with stars, their bodies all
And wings were set with eyes ; with eyes the wheels¹

¹ 'Wheels : ' see Ezekiel.

Of beryl, and careering fires between ; 756
 Over their heads a crystal firmament,¹
 Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid with pure
 Amber, and colours of the showery arch.
 He, in celestial panoply all arm'd
 Of radiant Urim,² work divinely wrought,
 Ascended : at his right hand Victory
 Sat eagle-wing'd ; beside him hung his bow
 And quiver with three-bolted thunder stor'd ;
 And from about him fierce effusion roll'd
 Of smoke, and bickering flame, and sparkles dire :
 Attended with ten thousand thousand Saints,
 He onward came ; far off his coming shone ;
 And twenty thousand (I their number heard)
 Chariots of God, half on each hand, were seen ; 770
 He on the wings of Cherub rode sublime
 On the crystalline sky ; in sapphire thron'd,
 Illustrious far and wide : but by his own
 First seen ; Then unexpected joy surpris'd,
 When the great ensign of Messiah blaz'd
 Aloft, by Angels borne, his sign in Heaven ;
 Under whose conduct Michael soon reduc'd
 His army, circumfus'd on either wing,
 Under their Head imbodied all in one.
 Before him Power Divine his way prepar'd ; 780
 At his command the uprooted hills retir'd,
 Each to his place ; they heard his voice, and went
 Obsequious ; Heaven his wonted face renew'd,
 And with fresh flow'rets hill and valley smil'd.
 This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdur'd,
 And to rebellious fight rallied their Powers,
 Insensate, hope conceiving from despair.

¹ 'Crystal firmament : ' the 'terrible crystal' of Ezekiel.—² 'Urim : ' referring to the stones of mystic import on the high priest's breast.

In heavenly Spirits could such perverseness dwell ? 788
But to convince the proud what signs avail,
Or wonders move the obdurate to relent ?
They, harden'd more by what might most reclaim,
Grieving to see his glory, at the sight
Took envy ; and, aspiring to his highth,
Stood re-embattled fierce, by force or fraud
Weening to prosper, and at length prevail
Against God and Messiah, or to fall
In universal ruin last ; and now
To final battle drew, disdaining flight,
Or faint retreat ; when the great Son of God
To all his host on either hand thus spake. 800

Stand still in bright array, ye Saints, here stand,
Ye Angels arm'd ; this day from battle rest :
Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause ;
And as ye have receiv'd, so have ye done,
Invincibly : But of this cursed crew
The punishment to other hand belongs :
Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints :
Number to this day's work is not ordain'd,
Nor multitude ; stand only, and behold 810
God's indignation on these godless pour'd
By me ; not you, but me, they have despis'd,
Yet envied ; against me is all their rage,
Because the Father, to whom in Heaven supreme
Kingdom, and power, and glory appertains,
Hath honour'd me, according to his will.
Therefore to me their doom he hath assign'd ;
That they may have their wish, to try with me
In battle which the stronger proves ; they all,
Or I alone against them ; since by strength 820
They measure all, of other excellence

Not emulous, nor care who them excels ; 822
Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe.

So spake the Son, and into terrour chang'd
His countenance too severe to be beheld,
And full of wrath bent on his enemies.
At once the Four spread out their starry wings
With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
Of his fierce chariot roll'd, as with the sound
Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host. 830
He on his impious foes right onward drove,
Gloomy as night : under his burning wheels
The steadfast empyréan shook throughout,
All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
Among them he arriv'd ; in his right hand
Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
Before him, such as in their souls infix'd
Plagues : They, astonish'd, all resistance lost,
All courage ; down their idle weapons dropt :
O'er shields, and helms, and helmed heads he rode 840
Of Thrones and mighty Seraphim prostrate,
That wish'd the mountains now might be again
Thrown on them, as a shelter from his ire.
Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
His arrows, from the fourfold-visaged Four
Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels
Distinct alike with multitude of eyes ;
One Spirit in them rul'd ; and every eye
Glar'd lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
Among the accurs'd, that wither'd all their strength, 850
And of their wonted vigour left them drain'd,
Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen.
Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd
His thunder in mid volley ; for he meant
Not to destroy, but root them out of Heaven :

The overthrown he rais'd, and as a herd 856
Of goats or timorous flock together throng'd,
Drove them before him thunder-struck, pursued
With terrours and with furies, to the bounds
And crystal wall of Heaven ; which, opening wide,
Roll'd inward, and a spacious gap disclos'd
Into the wasteful deep : The monstrous sight
Struck them with horror backward, but far worse
Urg'd them behind : Headlong themselves they threw
Down from the verge of Heaven ; eternal wrath
Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.

Hell heard the unsufferable noise, Hell saw
Heaven ruining from Heaven, and would have fled
Affrighted ; but strict Fate had cast too deep
Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound. 870
Nine days they fell : Confounded Chaos roar'd,
And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout
Incumber'd him with ruin : Hell at last
Yawning receiv'd them whole, and on them clos'd ;
Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire
Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.
Disburden'd Heaven rejoic'd, and soon repair'd
Her mural breach, returning whence it roll'd.
Sole Victor, from the expulsion of his foes, 880
Messiah his triumphal chariot turn'd :
To meet him all his Saints, who silent stood
Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,
With jubilee advanc'd ; and, as they went,
Shaded with branching palm, each Order bright,
Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,
Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion given,
Worthiest to reign : He, celebrated, rode
Triumphant through mid Heaven, into the courts

And temple of his Mighty Father thron'd 890
On high ; who into glory him receiv'd,
Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.

Thus, measuring things in Heaven by things on Earth
At thy request, and that thou may'st beware
By what is past, to thee I have reveal'd
What might have else to human race been hid ;
The discord which befell, and war in Heaven
Among the Angelick Powers, and the deep fall
Of those too high aspiring who rebell'd
With Satan ; he who envies now thy state, 900
Who now is plotting how he may seduce
Thee also from obedience, that, with him,
Bereav'd of happiness, thou may'st partake
His punishment eternal misery ;
Which would be all his solace and revenge,
As a despite done against the Most High,
Thee once to gain companion of his woe.
But listen not to his temptations : warn
Thy weaker ; let it profit thee to have heard,
By terrible example, the reward
Of disobedience : firm they might have stood,
Yet fell ; remember, and fear to transgress. 912

BOOK VII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Raphael, at the request of Adam, relates how and wherefore this world was first created; that God, after the expelling of Satan and his angels out of heaven, declared his pleasure to create another world, and other creatures to dwell therein; sends his Son with glory, and attendance of angels, to perform the work of creation in six days: the angels celebrate with hymns the performance thereof, and his re-ascension into heaven.

DESCEND from heaven, Urania,¹ by that name
If rightly thou art call'd, whose voice divine
Following, above the Olympian hill I soar,
Above the flight of Pegaséan wing!
The meaning not the name, I call: for thou
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwell'st; but, heavenly-born,
Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
Thou with eternal Wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play 10
In presence of the Almighty Father, pleas'd
With thy celestial song. Up led by thee
Into the Heaven of Heavens I have presum'd,
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
Thy tempering: with like safety guided down,
Return me to my native element:
Lest, from this flying steed unrein'd (as once
Bellerophon,² though from a lower clime),
Dismounted, on the Aleian field I fall,
Erroneous there to wander, and forlorn.

¹ 'Urania:' heavenly muse. — ² 'Bellerophon,' who attempted to ride to heaven on Pegasus, but fell down on the Aleian field, where he wandered till he died.

Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound 21
 Within the visible diurnal sphere ;
 Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,
 More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchang'd
 To hoarse or mute, though fall'n on evil days,
 On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues ;
 In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round,
 And solitude ; yet not alone, while thou
 Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
 Purples the east : still govern thou my song, 30
 Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
 But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
 Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
 Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard¹
 In Rhodope,² where woods and rocks had ears
 To rapture, till the savage clamour drown'd
 Both harp and voice ; nor could the Muse defend
 Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores :
 For thou art heavenly, she an empty dream.

Say, goddess, what ensu'd when Raphaël, 40
 The affable Arch-Angel, had forewarn'd
 Adam, by dire example, to beware
 Apostasy, by what befell in Heaven
 To those apostates ; lest the like befall
 In Paradise to Adam or his race,
 Charge not to touch the interdicted tree,
 If they transgress, and slight that sole command,
 So easily obey'd amid the choice
 Of all tastes else to please their appetite,
 Though wandering. He, with his consorted Eve, 50
 The story heard attentive, and was fill'd
 With admiration, and deep muse, to hear
 Of things so high and strange ; things to their thought

¹ 'Thracian bard : ' Orpheus.—² 'Rhodope : ' a mountain in Thrace.

So unimaginable, as hate in Heaven, 54
And war so near the peace of God in bliss,
With such confusion: but the evil, soon
Driven back, redounded as a flood on those
From whom it sprung; impossible to mix
With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repeal'd
The doubts that in his heart arose: and now 60
Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know
What nearer might concern him, how this world
Of Heaven and Earth conspicuous first began;
When, and whereof created; for what cause;
What within Eden, or without, was done
Before his memory; as one whose drouth
Yet scarce allay'd still eyes the current stream,
Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites,
Proceeded thus to ask his heavenly guest.

Great things, and full of wonder in our ears, 70
Far differing from this world, thou hast reveal'd,
Divine interpreter! by favour sent
Down from the empyréan, to forewarn
Us timely of what might else have been our loss,
Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach;
For which to the infinitely Good we owe
Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
Receive, with solemn purpose to observe
Immutably his sovran will, the end
Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsaf'd 80
Gently, for our instruction, to impart
Things above earthly thought, which yet concern'd
Our knowing, as to highest wisdom seem'd,
Deign to descend now lower, and relate
What may no less perhaps avail us known,
How first began this Heaven which we behold
Distant so high, with moving fires adorn'd

Innumerable ; and this which yields or fills 88
 All space, the ambient air wide interfus'd
 Embracing round this florid earth ; what cause
 Mov'd the Creator, in his holy rest
 Through all eternity, so late to build
 In Chaos ; and the work begun, how soon
 Absolv'd ;¹ if unforbid thou may'st unfold
 What we, not to explore the secrets ask
 Of his eternal empire, but the more
 To magnify his works, the more we know.
 And the great light of day yet wants to run
 Much of his race though steep ; suspense in Heaven
 Held by thy voice, thy potent voice, he hears, 100
 And longer will delay to hear thee tell
 His generation, and the rising birth
 Of Nature from the unapparent Deep :
 Or if the star of evening and the moon
 Haste to thy audience, Night with her will bring
 Silence ; and Sleep, listening to thee, will watch ;
 Or we can bid his absence, till thy song
 End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine.

Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought ;
 And thus the Godlike Angel answer'd mild. 110

This also thy request, with caution ask'd,
 Obtain ; though to recount almighty works
 What words or tongue of Seraph can suffice,
 Or heart of man suffice to comprehend ?
 Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve
 To glorify the Maker, and infer
 Thee also happier, shall not be withheld
 Thy hearing ; such commission from above
 I have receiv'd, to answer thy desire
 Of knowledge within bounds ; beyond, abstain

¹ 'Absolved : ' finished.

To ask ; nor let thine own inventions hope 121
Things not reveal'd, which the invisible King,
Only Omniscient, hath suppress'd in night ;
To none communicable in Earth or Heaven :
Enough is left besides to search and know.
But knowledge is as food, and needs no less
Her temperance over appetite, to know
In measure what the mind may well contain ;
Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind. 130

Know, then, that after Lucifer from heaven
(So call him, brighter once amidst the host
Of angels, than that star the stars among,)
Fell with his flaming legions through the deep
Into his place, and the great Son return'd
Victorious with his Saints, the Omnipotent
Eternal Father from his throne beheld
Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake.

At least our envious Foe hath fail'd, who thought
All like himself rebellious, by whose aid 140
This inaccessible high strength, the seat
Of Deity supreme, us dispossess'd,
He trusted to have seiz'd, and into fraud
Drew many, whom their place knows here no more :
Yet far the greater part have kept, I see,
Their station ; Heaven, yet populous, retains
Number sufficient to possess her realms
Though wide, and this high temple to frequent
With ministeries due, and solemn rites :
But, lest his heart exalt him in the harm 150
Already done, to have dispeopled Heaven,
My damage fondly deem'd, I can repair
That detriment, if such it be to lose
Self-lost ; and in a moment will create

Another world, out of one man a race 155
 Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
 Not here ; till, by degrees of merit raised,
 They open to themselves at length the way
 Up hither, under long obedience tried ;
 And Earth be chang'd to Heaven, and Heaven to Earth.
 One kingdom, joy and union without end. 161

Meanwhile inhabit lax,¹ ye Powers of Heaven,
 And thou my Word, begotten Son, by thee
 This I perform ; speak thou, and be it done !
 My overshadowing Spirit and Might with thee
 I send along : ride forth, and bid the Deep
 Within appointed bounds be Heaven and Earth :
 Boundless the Deep, because I Am who fill
 Infinitude, nor vacuous the space.

Though I, uncircumscrib'd myself, retire, 170
 And put not forth my goodness, which is free
 To act or not, Necessity and Chance
 Approach not me, and what I will is Fate.

So spake the Almighty, and to what he spake
 His Word, the Filial Godhead, gave effect.
 Immediate are the acts of God, more swift
 Than time or motion, but to human ears
 Cannot without process of speech be told,
 So told as earthly notion can receive.

Great triumph and rejoicing was in Heaven, 180
 When such was heard declar'd the Almighty's will ;
 Glory they sung to the Most High, good-will
 To future men, and in their dwellings peace ;
 Glory to him whose just avenging ire
 Had driven out the ungodly from his sight
 And the habitations of the just ; to Him
 Glory and praise, whose wisdom had ordain'd

¹ 'Inhabit lax : ' i. e., dwell more at large.

Good out of evil to create ; instead 188
 Of Spirits malign, a better race to bring
 Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse
 His good to worlds and ages infinite.

So sang the Hierarchies : Meanwhile the Son
 On his great expedition now appear'd,
 Girt with Omnipotence, with radiance crown'd
 Of Majesty Divine ; sapience and love
 Immense, and all his Father in him shone.
 About his chariot numberless were pour'd
 Cherub, and Seraph, Potentates, and Thrones,
 And Virtues, winged Spirits, and chariots wing'd
 From the armoury of God ; where stand of old 200
 Myriads, between two brazen mountains lodg'd
 Against a solemn day, harness'd at hand,
 Celestial equipage ; and now came forth
 Spontaneous, for within them Spirit liv'd,
 Attendant on their Lord : Heaven open'd wide
 Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound
 On golden hinges moving, to let forth
 The King of Glory, in his powerful Word
 And Spirit, coming to create new worlds.
 On heavenly ground they stood ; and from the shore 210
 They view'd the vast immeasurable abyss
 Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
 Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds
 And surging waves, as mountains, to assault
 Heaven's highth, and with the center mix the pole.

Silence, ye troubled Waves, and thou Deep, peace,
 Said then the Omnifick Word ; your discord end !
 Nor staid ; but, on the wings of Cherubim
 Uplifted, in paternal glory rode
 Far into Chaos, and the world unborn ; 220
 For Chaos heard his voice : Him all his train

Follow'd in bright procession, to behold 222
 Creation, and the wonders of his might.
 Then staid the fervid wheels, and in his hand
 He took the golden compasses, prepar'd
 In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
 This universe, and all created things :
 One foot he center'd, and the other turn'd
 Round through the vast profundity obscure ;
 And said, Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds, 230
 This be thy just circumference, O World !
 Thus God the Heaven created, thus the Earth,
 Matter unform'd and void: Darkness profound
 Cover'd the abyss : but on the watery calm
 His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread,
 And vital virtue infus'd, and vital warmth,
 Throughout the fluid mass : but downward purg'd
 The black tartareous cold infernal dregs,
 Adverse to life : then founded, then conglob'd
 Like things to like ; the rest to several place 240
 Disparted, and between spun out the air ;
 And Earth self-balanc'd on her center hung.

Let there be light, said God ; and forthwith Light
 Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,
 Sprung from the deep ; and from her native east
 To journey through the aery gloom began,
 Spher'd in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun
 Was not ; she in a cloudy tabernacle
 Sojourn'd the while. God saw the light was good ;
 And light from darkness by the hemisphere 250
 Divided : light the Day, and darkness Night,
 He nam'd. Thus was the first day even and morn :
 Nor pass'd uncelebrated, nor unsung
 By the celestial choirs, when orient light
 Exhaling first from darkness they beheld ;

Birth-day of Heaven and Earth; with joy and shout
The hollow universal orb they fill'd, 257
And touch'd their golden harps, and hymning prais'd
God and his works; Creator him they sung,
Both when first evening was, and when first morn.

Again, God said, Let there be firmament
Amid the waters, and let it divide
The waters from the waters; and God made
The firmament, expanse of liquid, pure,
Transparent, elemental air, diffus'd
In circuit to the uttermost convex
Of this great round; partition firm and sure,
The waters underneath from those above
Dividing; for as earth, so he the world
Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide 270
Crystalline ocean, and the loud misrule
Of Chaos far remov'd; lest fierce extremes
Contiguous might distemper the whole frame:
And Heaven he nam'd the Firmament: So even
And morning chorus sung the second day.

The Earth was form'd, but in the womb as yet
Of waters, embryo immature involv'd,
Appear'd not: over all the face of Earth
Main ocean flow'd, not idle; but, with warm
Prolifick humour softening all her globe, 280
Fermented the great mother to conceive,
Sate with genial moisture; when God said,
Be gather'd now, ye waters under Heaven
Into one place, and let dry land appear.
Immediately the mountains huge appear
Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
Into the clouds; their tops ascend the sky:
So high as heav'd the tumid hills, so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,

Capacious bed of waters : Thither they
Hasted with glad precipitance, uproll'd,
As drops on dust conglobing from the dry :
Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
For haste : such flight the great command impress'd
On the swift floods : As armies at the call
Of trumpet (for of armies thou hast heard)
Troop to their standard ; so the watery throng,
Wave rolling after wave, where way they found,
If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,
Soft-ebbing ; nor withstood them rock or hill ; 300
But they, or under ground, or circuit wide
With serpent error wandering, found their way,
And on the washy ooze deep channels wore ;
Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
All but within those banks, where rivers now
Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.
The dry land, Earth ; and the great réceptacle
Of congregated waters, he called Seas :
And saw that it was good ; and said, Let the Earth
Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed, 310
And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,
Whose seed is in herself upon the Earth.
He scarce had said, when the bare Earth till then
Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorn'd,
Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad
Her universal face with pleasant green ;
Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flower'd,
Op'ning their various colours, and made gay
Her bosom, smelling sweet : and, these scarce blown,
Forth flourish'd thick the clustering vine, forth crept 320
The swelling gourd, up stood the corny reed
Embattled in her field, and the humble shrub,

And bush with frizzled hair implicit :¹ Last 323
 Rose, as in dance, the stately trees, and spread
 Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemm'd
 Their blossoms: With high woods the hills were crown'd ;
 With tufts the valleys, and each fountain-side ;
 With borders long the rivers : that Earth now
 Seem'd like to Heaven, a seat where gods might dwell,
 Or wander with delight, and love to haunt 330
 Her sacred shades : though God had yet not rain'd
 Upon the Earth, and man to till the ground
 None was ; but from the Earth a dewy mist
 Went up, and water'd all the ground, and each
 Plant of the field ; which, ere it was in the Earth,
 God made, and every herb, before it grew
 On the green stem : God saw that it was good :
 So even and morn recorded the third day.

Again the Almighty spake, Let there be lights
 High in the expanse of Heaven, to divide 340
 The day from night ; and let them be for signs,
 For seasons, and for days, and circling years ;
 And let them be for lights, as I ordain
 Their office in the firmament of Heaven,
 To give light on the Earth ; and it was so.
 And God made two great lights, great for their use
 To Man, the greater to have rule by day,
 The less by night, altern ; and made the stars,
 And set them in the firmament of Heaven
 To illuminate the Earth, and rule the day 350
 In their vicissitude, and rule the night,
 And light from darkness to divide. God saw,
 Surveying his great work, that it was good :
 For of celestial bodies first the sun,
 A mighty sphere he fram'd, unlightsome first,

¹ 'Implicit : ' *i. e.*, entangled.

Though of ethereal mould : then form'd the moon 356
 Globose, and every magnitude of stars,
 And sow'd with stars the Heaven, thick as a field :
 Of light by far the greater part he took,
 Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and plac'd
 In the sun's orb, made porous to receive
 And drink the liquid light ; firm to retain
 Her gather'd beams, great palace now of light.
 Hither, as to their fountain, other stars
 Repairing, in their golden urns draw light,
 And hence the morning planet gilds her horns ;
 By tincture or reflection they augment
 Their small peculiar, though from human sight
 So far remote, with diminution seen.
 First in his east the glorious lamp was seen, 370
 Regent of day, and all the horizon round
 Invested with bright rays, jocund to run
 His longitude through Heaven's high road ; the gray
 Dawn, and the Pleiades,¹ before him danc'd,
 Shedding sweet influence : Less bright the moon,
 But opposite in levell'd west was set,
 His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
 From him ; for other light she needed none
 In that aspect, and still that distance keeps
 Till night ; then in the east her turn she shines, 380
 Revolv'd on Heaven's great axle, and her reign
 With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,
 With thousand thousand stars, that then appear'd
 Spangling the hemisphere : Then first adorn'd
 With their bright luminaries that set and rose,
 Glad evening and glad morn crown'd the fourth day.
 And God said, Let the waters generate

¹ 'The Pleiades:' meaning that the Creation took place in Spring, when they rise.

Reptile with spawn abundant, living soul: 388
And let fowl fly above the Earth, with wings
Display'd on the open firmament of Heaven.
And God created the great whales, and each
Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously
The waters generated by their kinds;
And every bird of wing after his kind;
And saw that it was good, and bless'd them, saying,
Be fruitful, multiply, and in the seas,
And lakes, and running streams, the waters fill;
And let the fowl be multiplied on the Earth.
Forthwith the sounds and seas, each creek and bay,
With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals 400
Of fish that with their fins, and shining scales
Glide under the green wave, in sculls that oft
Bank the mid sea: part single, or with mate,
Graze the sea-weed their pasture, and through groves
Of coral stray; or, sporting with quick glance,
Show to the sun their wav'd coats dropt with gold;
Or, in their pearly shells at ease, attend
Moist nutriment; or under rocks their food
In jointed armour watch: on smooth the seal
And bended dolphins play: part huge of bulk 410
Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,
Tempest the ocean: there leviathan,
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep
Stretch'd like a promontory sleeps or swims,
And seems a moving land; and at his gills
Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out, a sea.
Meanwhile the tepid caves, and fens, and shores,
Their brood as num'rous hatch'd, from the egg that soon,
Bursting with kindly rupture forth disclos'd
Their callow young; but feather'd soon and fledge

They summ'd their pens ;¹ and, soaring the air sublime,
 With clang despis'd the ground, under a cloud 422
 In prospect ; there the eagle and the stork
 On cliffs and cedar-tops their eyries build ;
 Part loosely wing the region, part more wise
 In common, rang'd in figure wedge their way,
 Intelligent of seasons, and set forth
 Their aery caravan, high over seas
 Flying, and over lands, with mutual wing
 Easing their flight ; so steers the prudent crane 430
 Her annual voyage, borne on winds ; the air
 Floats as they pass, fann'd with unnumber'd plumes :
 From branch to branch the smaller birds with song
 Solac'd the woods, and spread their painted wings
 Till even ; nor then the solemn nightingale
 Ceas'd warbling, but all night tun'd her soft lays :
 Others, on silver lakes and rivers, bath'd
 Their downy breast ; the swan, with arched neck,
 Between her white wings mantling proudly, rows
 Her state with oary feet ; yet oft they quit 440
 The dank, and, rising on stiff pennons, tower
 The mid aëreal sky : Others on ground
 Walk'd firm ; the crested cock whose clarion sounds
 The silent hours, and the other whose gay train
 Adorns him, colour'd with the florid hue
 Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus
 With fish replenish'd, and the air with fowl,
 Ev'ning and morn solémniz'd the fifth day.

The sixth, and of creation last, arose
 With evening harps and matin ; when God said, 450
 Let the Earth bring forth soul living in her kind,
 Cattle, and creeping things, and beast of the Earth,

¹ 'Summed their pens : ' a term in falconry, signifying the full growth of hawks' feathers.

Each in their kind. The Earth obey'd, and straight,
 Opening her fertile womb teem'd at a birth 454
 Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms,
 Limb'd and full-grown: Out of the ground uprose,
 As from his lair, the wild beast where he wons
 In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den;
 Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walk'd:
 The cattle in the fields and meadows green: 460
 Those rare and solitary, these in flocks
 Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upsprung.
 The grassy clods now calv'd; now half appear'd
 The tawny lion, pawing to get free
 His hinder parts, then springs as broke from bonds,
 And rampant shakes his brinded mane; the ounce,
 The libbard, and the tiger, as the mole
 Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw
 In hillocks: The swift stag from under ground 469
 Bore up his branching head: Scarce from his mould
 Behemoth,¹ biggest born of earth, upheav'd
 His vastness: Fleec'd the flocks and bleating rose,
 As plants: Ambiguous between sea and land,
 The river-horse, and scaly crocodile.
 At once came forth whatever creeps the ground,
 Insect or worm: those wav'd their limber fans
 For wings, and smallest lineaments exact
 In all the liveries deck'd of summer's pride,
 With spots of gold and purple, azure and green:
 These as a line their long dimension drew, 480
 Streaking the ground with sinuous trace; not all
 Minims² of nature; some of serpent kind,
 Wonderous in length and corpulence, involv'd
 Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept

¹ 'Behemoth:' Milton means the elephant.—² Minims,' i. e., smallest productions.

The parsimonious emmet, provident 485
 Of future ; in small room large heart enclos'd ;
 Pattern of just equality perhaps,
 Hereafter, join'd in her popular tribes
 Of commonalty. Swarming next appear'd
 The female bee, that feeds her husband drone 490
 Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
 With honey stor'd ; The rest are numberless,
 And thou their natures know'st, and gav'st them names,
 Needless to thee repeated ; nor unknown
 The serpent, subtlest beast of all the field,
 Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes
 And hairy mane terrifick, though to thee
 Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.

Now heaven in all her glory shone, and roll'd
 Her motions as the Great first Mover's hand 500
 First wheel'd their course : Earth, in her rich attire
 Consummate, lovely smil'd ; air, water, earth,
 By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was walk'd
 Frequent ; and of the sixth day yet remain'd :
 There wanted yet the master-work, the end
 Of all yet done ; a creature who, not prone
 And brute as other creatures, but endu'd
 With sanctity of reason, might erect
 His stature, and upright with front serene
 Govern the rest, self-knowing ; and from thence 510
 Magnanimous to correspond with Heaven,
 But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
 Descends, thither with heart, and voice, and eyes
 Directed in devotion, to adore
 And worship God Supreme, who made him chief
 Of all his works : therefore the Omnipotent
 Eternal Father (for where is not He
 Present?) thus to his Son audibly spake.

Let us make now Man in our image, Man 519
In our similitude, and let them rule
Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,
Beast of the field, and over all the Earth,
And every creeping thing that creeps the ground.
This said, he form'd thee, Adam, thee, O man,
Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breath'd
The breath of life; in his own image he
Created thee, in the image of God.
Express; and thou becam'st a living soul.
Male he created thee; but thy consórt
Female, for race; then bless'd mankind, and said, 530
Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the Earth;
Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold
Over fish of the sea, and fowl of the air,
And every living thing that moves on the Earth.
Wherever thus created, for no place
Is yet distinct by name, thence, as thou know'st,
He brought thee into this delicious grove,
This garden planted with the trees of God,
Delectable both to behold and taste;
And freely all their pleasant fruit for food 540
Gave thee; all sorts are here that all the Earth yields,
Variety without end; but of the tree
Which, tasted, works knowledge of good and evil,
Thou may'st not; in the day thou eat'st, thou diest;
Death is the penalty impos'd; beware,
And govern well thy appetite; lest Sin
Surprise thee, and her black attendant Death.

Here finish'd he, and all that he had made
View'd, and behold all was entirely good;
So even and morn accomplish'd the sixth day: 550
Yet not till the Creator, from his work
Desisting, though unwearied, up return'd,

Up to the Heaven of Heavens, his high abode; 553
Thence to behold this new-created world,
The addition of his empire, how it show'd
In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,
Answering his great idea. Up he rode
Follow'd with acclamation, and the sound
Symphonious of ten thousand harps, that tun'd
Angelick harmonies: The earth, the air 560
Resounded, (thou remember'st, for thou heard'st,)
The heavens and all the constellations rung,
The planets in their station listening stood,
While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.
Open, ye everlasting gates! they sung,
Open, ye Heavens! your living doors; let in
The great Creator from his work return'd
Magnificent, his six days' work, a World;
Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deign
To visit oft the dwellings of just men, 570
Delighted; and with frequent intercourse
Thither will send his winged messengers
On errands of supernal grace. So sung
The glorious train ascending: He through Heaven,
That open'd wide her blazing portals, led
To God's eternal house direct the way;
A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold
And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear,
Seen in the galaxy, that milky way,
Which nightly, as a circling zone, thou seest 580
Powder'd with stars. And now on Earth the seventh
Evening arose in Eden, for the sun
Was set, and twilight from the east came on,
Forerunning night; when at the holy mount
Of Heaven's high-seated top, the imperial throne
Of Godhead, fix'd for ever firm and sure,

The Filial Power arriv'd, and sat him down 587
With his Great Father; for he also went
Invisible, yet staid, (such privilege
Hath Omnipresence) and the work ordain'd,
Author and End of all things; and, from work
Now resting, bless'd and hallow'd the seventh day,
As resting on that day from all his work;
But not in silence holy kept: the harp
Had work, and rested not; the solemn pipe
And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,
All sounds on fret by string or golden wire,
Temper'd soft tunings, intermix'd with voice
Choral or unison: of incense clouds,
Fuming from golden censers, hid the mount. 600
Creation and the six days' acts they sung:
Great are thy works, Jehovah! infinite
Thy power! what thought can measure thee, or tongue
Relate thee! Greater now in thy return
Than from the giant Angels: Thee that day
Thy thunders magnified; but to create
Is greater than created to destroy.
Who can impair thee, Mighty King, or bound
Thy empire? easily the proud attempt
Of Spirits apostate, and their counsels vain, 610
Thou hast repell'd; while impiously they thought
Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw
The number of thy worshippers. Who seeks
To lessen thee, against his purpose serves
To manifest the more thy might: his evil
Thou usest, and from thence creat'st more good.
Witness this new-made world, another Heaven
From Heaven-gate not far, founded in view
On the clear hyaline,¹ the glassy sea;

¹ 'Hyaline:' translated immediately the glassy sea.

Of amplitude almost immense, with stars 620
Numerous, and every star perhaps a world
Of destin'd habitation; but thou know'st
Their seasons: among these the seat of Men,
Earth, with her nether ocean circumfus'd,
Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy Men,
And sons of Men, whom God hath thus advanc'd!
Created in his image, there to dwell
And worship Him; and in reward to rule
Over his works, on earth, in sea, or air,
And multiply a race of worshippers 630
Holy and just: Thrice happy, if they know
Their happiness, and persevere upright!

So sung they, and the empyréan rung
With halleluiahs; Thus was sabbath kept.
And thy request think now fulfill'd, that ask'd
How first this world and face of things began,
And what before thy memory was done
From the beginning; that posterity,
Inform'd by thee, might know: If else thou seek'st
Aught, not surpassing human measure, say. 640

BOOK VIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Adam inquires concerning celestial motions; is doubtfully answered, and exhorted to search rather things more worthy of knowledge: Adam assents; and, still desirous to detain Raphael, relates to him what he remembered since his own creation; his placing in Paradise; his talk with God concerning solitude and fit society; his first meeting and nuptials with Eve; his discourse with the angel thereupon; who, after admonitions repeated, departs.

THE Angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice, that he awhile
Thought him still speaking, still stood fix'd to hear;
Then, as new-wak'd, thus gratefully replied.

What thanks sufficient, or what recompence
Equal, have I to render thee, divine
Historian, who thus largely hast allay'd
The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsaf'd
This friendly condescension to relate
Things, else by me unsearchable; now heard 10
With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,
With glory attributed to the high
Creator! Something yet of doubt remains,
Which only thy solution can resolve.

When I behold this goodly frame, this world,
Of Heaven and Earth consisting, and compute
Their magnitudes; this Earth, a spot, a grain,
An atom, with the firmament compar'd
And all her number'd stars, that seem to roll
Spaces incomprehensible, (for such 20
Their distance argues, and their swift return
Diurnal,) merely to officiate light

Round this opacous Earth, this punctual spot,¹ 23
 One day and night; in all their vast survey
 Useless besides; reasoning I oft admire,
 How Nature, wise and frugal, could commit
 Such disproportions, with superfluous hand
 So many nobler bodies to create,
 Greater so manifold, to this one use,
 For aught appears, and on their orbs impose 30
 Such restless revolution day by day
 Repeated; while the sedentary Earth,
 That better might with far less compass move,
 Serv'd by more noble than herself, attains
 Her end without least motion, and receives,
 As tribute, such a sumless journey brought
 Of incorporeal speed, her warmth, and light;
 Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails.

So spake our sire, and by his countenance seem'd
 Entering on studious thoughts abstruse; which Eve 40
 Perceiving, where she sat retir'd in sight,
 With lowliness majestic from her seat,
 And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,
 Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flowers,
 To visit how they prosper'd, bud and bloom,
 Her nursery; they at her coming sprung,
 And, touch'd by her fair tendance, gladlier grew.
 Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
 Delighted, or not capable her ear
 Of what was high: such pleasure she reserv'd, 50
 Adam relating, she sole auditress;
 Her husband the relater she preferr'd
 Before the angel, and of him to ask
 Chose rather: he, she knew, would intermix
 Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute

¹ 'Punctual spot:' spot like a *point* in size.

With conjugal caresses : from his lip 56
Not words alone pleas'd her. O ! when meet now
Such pairs, in love and mutual honour join'd ?
With goddess-like demeanour forth she went,
Not unattended ; for on her, as Queen,
A pomp of winning Graces waited still,
And from about her shot darts of desire
Into all eyes, to wish her still in sight.
And Raphael now, to Adam's doubt propos'd,
Benevolent and facile thus replied.

To ask or search, I blame thee not ; for Heaven
Is as the book of God before thee set,
Wherein to read his wonderous works, and learn
His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years :
This to attain, whether Heaven move, or Earth, 70
Imports not, if thou reckon right ; the rest
From Man or Angel the Great Architect
Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
His secrets to be scann'd by them who ought
Rather admire ; or, if they list to try
Conjecture, he his fabrick of the Heavens
Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move
His laughter at their quaint opinions wide
Hereafter ; when they come to model Heaven
And calculate the stars, how they will wield 80
The mighty frame ; how build, unbuild, contrive
To save appearances ; how gird the sphere
With centrick and eccentric scribbled o'er,
Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb :
Already by thy reasoning this I guess,
Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposest
That bodies bright and greater should not serve
The less not bright, nor Heaven such journeys run,
Earth sitting still, when she alone receives

The benefit : Consider first that great
Or bright infers not excellence : the Earth, 90
Though, in comparison of Heaven, so small,
Nor glistening, may of solid good contain
More plenty than the sun that barren shines ;
Whose virtue on itself works no effect,
But in the fruitful Earth ; there first receiv'd,
His beams, unactive else, their vigour find.
Yet not to Earth are those bright luminaries
Officious ; but to thee, Earth's habitant.
And for the Heaven's wide circuit, let it speak 100
The Maker's high magnificence, who built
So spacious, and his line stretch'd out so far ;
That man may know he dwells not in his own ;
An edifice too large for him to fill,
Lodg'd in a small partition ; and the rest
Ordain'd for uses to his Lord best known.
The swiftness of those circles áttribute,
Though numberless, to his Omnipotence,
That to corporeal substances could add
Speed almost spiritual : Me thou think'st not slow, 110
Who since the morning hour set out from Heaven
Where God resides, and ere mid-day arriv'd
In Eden ; distance inexpressible
By numbers that have name. But this I urge,
Admitting motion in the Heavens, to show
Invalid that which thee to doubt it mov'd ;
Not that I so affirm, though so it seem
To thee who hast thy dwelling here on Earth.
God, to remove his ways from human sense,
Plac'd Heaven from Earth so far, that earthly sight, 120
If it presume, might err in things too high,
And no advantage gain. What if the sun
Be center to the world ; and other stars,

By his attractive virtue and their own 124
 Incited, dance about him various rounds ?
 Their wandering course, now high, now low, then hid,
 Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
 In six thou seest ; and what if seventh to these
 The planet earth, so steadfast though she seem,
 Insensibly three different motions move ? 130
 Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe,
 Mov'd contrary with thwart obliquities ;
 Or save the sun his labour, and that swift
 Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb¹ suppos'd,
 Invisible else above all stars, the wheel
 Of day and night ; which needs not thy belief,
 If earth, industrious of herself, fetch day
 Travelling east, and with her part averse
 From the sun's beam meet night, her other part
 Still luminous by his ray. What if that light, 140
 Sent from her through the wide transpicious air,
 To the terrestrial moon be as a star,
 Enlightening her by day, as she by night
 This earth ; reciprocal if land be there,
 Fields and inhabitants ? Her spots thou seest
 As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce
 Fruits in her soften'd soil, for some to eat
 Allotted there ; and other suns perhaps,
 With their attendant moons, thou wilt descry,
 Communicating male and female light ; 150
 Which two great sexes animate the world,
 Stor'd in each orb perhaps with some that live.
 For such vast room in Nature unpossess'd
 By living soul, desart, and desolate,
 Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute

¹ 'Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb : ' the *primum mobile*—an imaginary sphere above that of the sun and the fixed stars.

Each orb a glimpse of light, convey'd so far 156
Down to this habitable, which returns
Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.
But whether thus these things, or whether not;
Whether the sun, predominant in heaven,
Rise on the earth; or earth rise on the sun;
He from the east his flaming road begin;
Or she from west her silent course advance,
With inoffensive pace that spinning sleeps
On her soft axle, while she paces even,
And bears thee soft with the smooth air along;
Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid;
Leave them to God above; him serve and fear!
Of other creatures, as him pleases best,
Wherever plac'd, let him dispose; joy thou 170
In what he gives to thee, this Paradise,
And thy fair Eve; Heaven is for thee too high
To know what passes there; be lowly wise:
Think only what concerns thee, and thy being;
Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there
Live, in what state, condition, or degree;
Contented that thus far hath been reveal'd
Not of Earth only, but of highest Heaven.

To whom thus Adam, clear'd of doubt, replied.
How fully hast thou satisfied me, pure 180
Intelligence of heaven, Angel serene!
And, freed from intricacies, taught to live
The easiest way; nor with perplexing thoughts
To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares,
And not molest us; unless we ourselves
Seek them with wandering thoughts, and notions vain.
But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end;

Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn, 190
That, not to know at large of things remote
From use, obscure and subtle; but to know
That which before us lies in daily life,
Is the prime wisdom: What is more, is fume,
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence;
And renders us, in things that most concern,
Unpractis'd, unprepar'd, and still to seek.
Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
A lower flight, and speak of things at hand
Useful; whence, haply, mention may arise 200
Of something not unseasonable to ask,
By sufferance, and thy wonted favour, deign'd.
Thee I have heard relating what was done
Ere my remembrance: now hear me relate
My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard;
And day is not yet spent: till then thou seest
How subtly to detain thee I devise;
Inviting thee to hear while I relate;
Fond! were it not in hope of thy reply:
For, while I sit with thee, I seem in Heaven; 210
And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
Than fruits of palm-tree pleasantest to thirst
And hunger both, from labour, at the hour
Of sweet repast: they satiate, and soon fill,
Though pleasant; but thy words, with grace divine
Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety.

To whom thus Raphael answer'd heavenly meek.
Nor are thy lips ungraceful, Sire of men,
Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee
Abundantly his gifts hath also pour'd; 220
Inward and outward both, his image fair:
Speaking; or mute, all comeliness and grace
Attends thee, and each word, each motion forms;

Nor less think we in Heaven of thee on Earth 224
Than of our fellow-servant, and inquire
Gladly into the ways of God with Man:
For God, we see, hath honour'd thee, and set
On man his equal love: Say therefore on;
For I that day was absent, as befell,
Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure, 230
Far on excursion towards the gates of Hell:
Squar'd in full legion (such command we had)
To see that none thence issued forth a spy,
Or enemy, while God was in his work;
Lest He, incens'd at such eruption bold,
Destruction with creation might have mix'd.
Not that they durst without his leave attempt;
But us He sends upon his high behests
For state, as Sovran King; and to inure
Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut, 240
The dismal gates, and barricado'd strong;
But long ere our approaching heard within
Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,
Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.
Glad we return'd up to the coasts of light
Ere sabbath evening: so we had in charge.
But thy relation now; for I attend,
Pleas'd with thy words no less than thou with mine.

So spake the Godlike Power, and thus our Sire.
For Man to tell how human life began 250
Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?
Desire with thee still longer to converse
Induc'd me. As new wak'd from soundest sleep,
Soft on the flowery herb I found me laid,
In balmy sweat; which with his beams the sun
Soon dried, and on the reeking moisture fed.
Straight toward Heaven my wondering eyes I turn'd

And gaz'd awhile the ample sky; till rais'd 258
By quick instinctive motion, up I sprung,
As thitherward endeavouring, and upright
Stood on my feet: about me round I saw
Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,
And liquid lapse of murmuring streams; by these,
Creatures that liv'd and mov'd, and walk'd or flew;
Birds on the branches warbling; all things smil'd
With fragrance, and with joy my heart o'erflow'd.
Myself I then perus'd, and limb by limb
Survey'd; and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
With supple joints, as lively vigour led:
But who I was, or where, or from what cause, 270
Knew not; to speak I tried, and forthwith spake;
My tongue obey'd, and readily could name
Whate'er I saw. Thou Sun, said I, fair light,
And thou, enlighten'd Earth, so fresh and gay,
Ye Hills, and Dales, ye Rivers, Woods, and Plains,
And ye that live and move, fair Creatures, tell,
Tell, if ye saw, how I came thus, how here?—
Not of myself;—by some great Maker then,
In goodness and in power pre-eminent:
Tell me, how I may know Him, how adore, 280
From whom I have that thus I move and live,
And feel that I am happier than I know.—
While thus I call'd, and stray'd I knew not whither,
From where I first drew air, and first beheld
This happy light; when, answer none return'd,
On a green shady bank, profuse of flowers,
Pensive I sat me down: There gentle sleep
First found me, and with soft oppression seiz'd
My drowsed sense, untroubled, though I thought
I then was passing to my former state, 290
Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:

When suddenly stood at my head a dream, 292
Whose inward apparition gently mov'd
My fancy to believe I yet had being,
And liv'd: One came, methought, of shape divine,
And said, "Thy mansion wants thee, Adam; rise,
First Man, of men innumerable ordain'd
First Father! call'd by thee, I come thy guide
To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepar'd."
So saying, by the hand he took me rais'd, 300
And over fields and waters, as in air,
Smooth-sliding without step, last led me up
A woody mountain; whose high top was plain,
A circuit wide, enclos'd, with goodliest trees
Planted, with walks and bowers; that what I saw
Of Earth before scarce pleasant seem'd. Each tree,
Loaden with fairest fruit that hung to the eye
Tempting, stirr'd in me sudden appetite
To pluck and eat; whereat I wak'd, and found
Before mine eyes all real, as the dream 310
Had lively shadow'd: Here had new begun
My wandering, had not He, who was my guide
Up hither, from among the trees appear'd,
Presence Divine. Rejoicing, but with awe,
In adoration at his feet I fell
Submiss; He rear'd me, and, "Whom thou sought'st I am,"
Said mildly, "Author of all this thou seest
Above, or round about thee, or beneath.
This Paradise I give thee, count it thine
To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat: 320
Of every tree that in the garden grows
Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth:
But of the tree whose operation brings
Knowledge of good and ill, which I have set
The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith,

Amid the garden by the tree of life, 326
Remember what I warn thee, shun to taste,
And shun the bitter consequence : for know,
The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command
Transgress'd, inevitably thou shalt die,
From that day mortal; and this happy state
Shalt lose, expell'd from hence into a world
Of woe and sorrow." Sternly He pronounc'd
The rigid interdiction, which resounds
Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice
Not to incur ; but soon his clear aspect
Return'd, and gracious purpose thus renew'd.
" Not only these fair bounds, but all the Earth
To thee and to thy race I give ; as lords
Possess it, and all things that therein live, 340
Or live in sea or air ; beast, fish, and fowl.
In sign whereof, each bird and beast behold
After their kinds ; I bring them to receive
From thee their names, and pay thee fealty
With low subjection : understand the same
Of fish within their watery residence,
Nor hither summon'd, since they cannot change
Their element, to draw the thinner air."
As thus He spake, each bird and beast behold
Approaching two and two : these cowering low 350
With blandishment ; each bird stoop'd on his wing.
I nam'd them as they pass'd, and understood
Their nature, with such knowledge God endu'd
My sudden apprehension : But in these
I found not what methought I wanted still ;
And to the Heavenly Vision thus presum'd.

O, by what name, for Thou above all these,
Above mankind, or aught than mankind higher,
Surpassest far my naming ; how may I

Adore Thee, Author of this universe, 360
 And all this good to man? for whose wellbeing
 So amply, and with hands so liberal,
 Thou hast provided all things: But with me
 I see not who partakes. In solitude
 What happiness, who can enjoy alone,
 Or all enjoying, what contentment find?
 Thus I presumptuous; and the Vision bright,
 As with a smile more brighten'd, thus replied:

What call'st thou solitude? Is not the earth
 With various living creatures, and the air, 370
 Replenish'd, and all these at thy command
 To come and play before thee? Know'st thou not
 Their language and their ways? They also know,
 And reason not contemptibly: With these
 Find pastime, and bear rule; thy realm is large.
 So spake the Universal Lord, and seem'd
 So ordering: I, with leave of speech implor'd,
 And humble deprecation, thus replied.

Let not my words offend Thee, Heavenly Power;
 My Maker, be propitious while I speak. 380
 Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,
 And these inferiour far beneath me set?
 Among unequals what society
 Can sort, what harmony, or true delight?
 Which must be mutual, in proportion due
 Given and receiv'd; but, in disparity
 The one intense, the other still remiss,
 Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
 Tedious alike: Of fellowship I speak
 Such as I seek, fit to participate 390
 All rational delight; wherein the brute
 Cannot be human consort: They rejoice
 Each with their kind, lion with lioness;

So fitly them in pairs thou hast combin'd: 394
Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl
So well converse, nor with the ox the ape;
Worse then can man with beast, and least of all.

Whereto the Almighty answer'd, not displeas'd.
A nice and subtle happiness, I see,
Thou to thyself proposest, in the choice 400
Of thy associates, Adam! and wilt taste
No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.
What think'st thou, then, of me, and this my state?
Seem I to thee sufficiently possess'd
Of happiness, or not, who am Alone
From all eternity; for none I know
Second to me, or like, equal much less.
How have I, then, with whom to hold converse,
Save with the creatures which I made, and those
To me inferiour, infinite descents 410

Beneath what other creatures are to thee?
He ceas'd; I lowly answer'd. To attain
The highth and depth of thy eternal ways
All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things!
Thou in Thyself art perfect, and in Thee
Is no deficiency found: Not so is man,
But in degree, the cause of his desire
By conversation with his like to help,
Or solace his defects. No need that Thou
Should'st propagate, already Infinite; 420
And through all numbers absolute, though One:
But Man by number is to manifest
His single imperfection, and beget
Like of his like, his image multiplied,
In unity defective; which requires
Collateral love, and dearest amity.
Thou in Thy secrecy although alone,

Best with Thyself accompanied, seek'st not 428
 Social communication; yet, so pleas'd,
 Canst raise Thy creature to what highth Thou wilt
 Of union or communion, deified:
 I, by conversing, cannot these erect
 From prone; nor in their ways complacence find.
 Thus I embolden'd spake, and freedom us'd
 Permissive, and acceptance found; which gain'd
 This answer from the gracious Voice Divine.

Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleas'd;
 And find thee knowing, not of beasts alone,
 Which thou hast rightly nam'd, but of thyself;
 Expressing well the spirit within thee free, 440
 My image, not imparted to the brute;
 Whose fellowship therefore unmeet for thee,
 Good reason was thou freely should'st dislike;
 And be so minded still: I, ere thou spak'st,
 Knew it not good for Man to be alone;
 And no such company as then thou saw'st
 Intended thee; for trial only brought,
 To see how thou couldst judge of fit and meet:
 What next I bring shall please thee, be assur'd,
 Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self, 450
 Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire.

He ended, or I heard no more; for now
 My earthly by his heavenly overpower'd,
 Which it had long stood under, strain'd to the highth
 In that celestial colloquy sublime,
 As with an object that excels the sense
 Dazzled and spent, sunk down; and sought repair
 Of Sleep, which instantly fell on me, call'd
 By Nature as in aid, and clos'd mine eyes.
 Mine eyes he clos'd, but open left the cell 460
 Of fancy, my internal sight; by which,

Abstract as in a trance, methought I saw, 462
Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape
Still glorious before whom awake I stood:
Who stooping open'd my left side, and took
From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,
And life-blood streaming fresh: wide was the wound,
But suddenly with flesh fill'd up and heal'd:
The rib he form'd and fashion'd with his hands:
Under his forming hands a creature grew, 470
Man-like, but different sex; so lovely fair,
That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd now
Mean, or in her summ'd up, in her contain'd
And in her looks; which from that time infus'd
Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,
And into all things from her air inspir'd
The spirit of love and amorous delight.
She disappear'd, and left me dark: I wak'd
To find her, or for ever to deplore
Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure: 480
When out of hope, behold her, not far off,
Such as I saw her in my dream, adorn'd
With what all Earth or Heaven could bestow
To make her amiable: On she came,
Led by her Heavenly Maker, though unseen,
And guided by his voice; nor uninform'd
Of nuptial sanctity, and marriage rites:
Grace was in all her steps, Heaven in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love.
I, overjoy'd, could not forbear aloud: 490

This turn hath made amends: Thou hast fulfill'd
Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
Giver of all things fair! but fairest this
Of all thy gifts! nor enviest. I now see
Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself

Before me : Woman is her name ; of Man 496
Extracted : for this cause he shall forego
Father and mother, and to his wife adhere ;
And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul.

She heard me thus ; and though divinely brought,
Yet innocence, and virgin modesty,
Her virtue, and the conscience of her worth,
That would be woo'd, and not unsought be won,
Not obvious, not obtrusive, but, retir'd,
The more desirable ; or, to say all,
Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
Wrought in her so, that, seeing me, she turn'd :
I follow'd her ; she what was honour knew,
And with obsequious majesty approv'd
My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower 510
I led her blushing like the morn : All heaven,
And happy constellations, on that hour
Shed their selectest influence ; the Earth
Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill ;
Joyous the birds ; fresh gales and gentle airs
Whisper'd it to the woods, and from their wings
Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,
Disporting, till the amorous bird of night
Sung spousal, and bade haste the evening star
On his hill-top, to light the bridal lamp. 520

Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought
My story to the sum of earthly bliss,
Which I enjoy ; and must confess to find
In all things else delight indeed, but such
As, us'd or not, works in the mind no change,
Nor vehement desire ; these delicacies,
I mean, of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flowers,
Walks, and the melody of birds ; but here
Far otherwise, transported I behold,

Transported touch; here passion first I felt, 530
Commotion strange! in all enjoyments else
Superiour and unmov'd; here only weak
Against the charm of Beauty's powerful glance.
Or Nature fail'd in me, and left some part
Not proof enough such object to sustain;
Or, from my side subducting, took perhaps
More than enough; at least on her bestow'd
Too much of ornament, in outward show
Elaborate, of inward less exact.

For well I understand in the prime end 540
Of Nature her the inferiour, in the mind
And inward faculties, which most excel;
In outward also her resembling less
His image who made both, and less expressing
The character of that dominion given
O'er other creatures: Yet when I approach
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems
And in herself complete, so well to know
Her own, that what she wills to do or say,
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best: 550
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded: Wisdom in discourse with her
Loses discountenanc'd, and like Folly shows;
Authority and Reason on her wait,
As one intended first, not after made
Occasionally; and, to consummate all,
Greatness of mind, and Nobleness, their seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her, as a guard angelick plac'd.

To whom the Angel, with contracted brow. 560
Accuse not Nature, she hath done her part;
Do thou but thine; and be not diffident
Of Wisdom; she deserts thee not, if thou

Dismiss not her, when most thou need'st her nigh, 564
 By attributing over much to things
 Less excellent, as thou thyself perceiv'st.
 For, what admir'st thou, what transports thee so?
 An outside? fair, no doubt, and worthy well
 Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love;
 Not thy subjection: Weigh with her thyself; 570
 Then value: Ofttimes nothing profits more
 Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right,
 Well manag'd; of that skill the more thou know'st,
 The more she will acknowledge thee her head,
 And to realities yield all her shows:
 Made so adorn for thy delight the more,
 So awful, that with honour thou may'st love
 Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.
 But if the sense of touch, whereby mankind
 Is propagated, seem such dear delight 580
 Beyond all other, think the same vouchsaf'd
 To cattle and each beast; which would not be
 To them made common and divulg'd, if aught
 Therein enjoy'd were worthy to subdue
 The soul of man, or passion in him move.
 What higher in her society thou find'st
 Attractive, human, rational, love still;
 In loving thou dost well, in passion not,
 Wherein true love consists not: Love refines
 The thoughts, and heart enlarges; hath his seat 590
 In reason, and is judicious; is the scale
 By which to heavenly love thou may'st ascend,
 Not sunk in carnal pleasure; for which cause,
 Among the beasts no mate for thee was found.
 To whom thus, half-abash'd, Adam replied.
 Neither her outside form'd so fair, nor aught
 In procreation common to all kinds

(Though higher of the genial bed by far, 598
And with mysterious reverence I deem,)
So much delights me, as those graceful acts,
Those thousand decencies, that daily flow
From all her words and actions mix'd with love
And sweet compliance, which declare unfeign'd
Union of mind, or in us both one soul ;
Harmony to behold in wedded pair
More grateful than harmonious sound to the ear.
Yet these subject not ; I to thee disclose
What inward thence I feel, not therefore foil'd,
Who meet with various objects, from the sense
Variously representing ; yet still free, 610
Approve the best, and follow what I approve.
To love, thou blam'st me not ; for Love, thou say'st,
Leads up to Heaven, is both the way and guide ;
Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask :
Love not the heavenly spirits, and how their love
Express they ? by looks only ? or do they mix
Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch ?

To whom the Angel, with a smile that glow'd
Celestial rosy red, Love's proper hue,
Answer'd. Let it suffice thee that thou know'st 620
Us happy, and without love no happiness.
Whatever pure thou in the body enjoy'st,
(And pure thou wert created,) we enjoy
In eminence ; and obstacle find none
Of membrane, joint, or limb, exclusive bars ;
Easier than air with air, if Spirits embrace,
Total they mix, union of pure with pure
Desiring, nor restrain'd conveyance need,
As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.
But I can now no more ; the parting sun

Beyond the earth's green Cape¹ and verdant Isles 631
Hesperian sets, my signal to depart.

Be strong, live happy, and love! But, first of all,
Him, whom to love is to obey, and keep

His great command; take heed lest passion sway

Thy judgment to do aught, which else free will

Would not admit: thine, and of all thy sons,

The weal or woe in thee is plac'd; beware!

I in thy persevering shall rejoice,

And all the Blest: Stand fast; to stand or fall 640

Free in thine own arbitrement it lies.

Perfect within, no outward aid require;

And all temptation to transgress repel.

So saying, he arose; whom Adam thus

Follow'd with benediction. Since to part,

Go, heavenly Guest, ethereal Messenger,

Sent from whose sovran goodness I adore!

Gentle to me and affable hath been

Thy condescension, and shall be honour'd ever

With grateful memory: Thou to mankind 650

Be good and friendly still, and oft return!

So parted they; the Angel up to Heaven

From the thick shade, and Adam to his bower.

¹ 'Green Cape:' Cape de Verd.

BOOK IX.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, having compassed the earth, with meditated guile returns, as a mist, by night into Paradise; enters into the serpent sleeping. Adam and Eve in the morning go forth to their labours, which Eve proposes to divide in several places, each labouring apart: Adam consents not, alleging the danger, lest that enemy of whom they were forewarned should attempt her, found alone: Eve, loath to be thought not circumspect or firm enough, urges her going apart, the rather desirous to make trial of her strength; Adam at last yields: the serpent finds her alone: his subtle approach, first gazing, then speaking; with much flattery extolling Eve above all other creatures. Eve, wondering to hear the serpent speak, asks how he attained to human speech, and such understanding, not till now; the serpent answers, that by tasting of a certain tree in the garden he attained both to speech and reason, till then void of both: Eve requires him to bring her to that tree, and finds it to be the tree of knowledge forbidden: the serpent, now grown bolder, with many wiles and arguments, induces her at length to eat: she, pleased with the taste, deliberates a while whether to impart thereof to Adam or not; at last brings him of the fruit; relates what persuaded her to eat thereof: Adam, at first amazed, but perceiving her lost, resolves, through vehemence of love, to perish with her; and, extenuating the trespass, eats also of the fruit: the effects thereof in them both; they seek to cover their nakedness; then fall to variance and accusation of one another.

No more of talk where God or Angel guest
With Man, as with his friend, familiar us'd
To sit indulgent, and with him partake
Rural repast; permitting him the while
Venial discourse unblam'd. I now must change
Those notes to tragick; foul distrust and breach
Disloyal on the part of Man, revolt,
And disobedience: on the part of Heaven
Now alienated, distance and distaste,
Anger and just rebuke, and judgement given,
That brought into this world a world of woe,

Sin and her shadow Death, and Misery, 12
 Death's harbinger: Sad task! yet argument
 Not less but more heroick than the wrath
 Of stern Achilles on his foe pursued
 Thrice fugitive about Troy wall; or rage
 Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous'd;
 Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so long
 Perplex'd the Greek, and Cytherea's son;
 If answerable style I can obtain 20
 Of my celestial patroness, who deigns
 Her nightly visitation unimplor'd,
 And dictates to me slumbering; or inspires
 Easy my unpremeditated verse:
 Since first this subject for heroick song
 Pleas'd me long choosing, and beginning late;
 Not sedulous by nature to indite
 Wars, hitherto the only argument
 Heroick deem'd; chief mastery to dissect
 With long and tedious havoc, fabled knights 30
 In battles feign'd: the better fortitude
 Of patience and heroick martyrdom
 Unsung; or to describe races and games,
 Or tilting furniture, imblazon'd shields,
 Impresses quaint,¹ caparisons and steeds,
 Bases² and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights
 At joust and tournament; then marshall'd feast
 Serv'd up in hall with sewers and seneschals;
 The skill of artifice or office mean,
 Not that which justly gives heroick name 40
 To person or to poem. Me, of these
 Nor skill'd nor studious, higher argument
 Remains; sufficient of itself to raise

¹ 'Impresses quaint:' devices on the shield.—² 'Bases:' mantles worn by knights.

That name, unless an age too late, or cold 44
 Climate, or years, damp my intended wing
 Depress'd; and much they may, if all be mine,
 Not hers, who brings it nightly to my ear.

The sun was sunk, and after him the star
 Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring
 Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter 50
 'Twixt day and night, and now from end to end
 Night's hemisphere had veil'd the horizon round:
 When Satan, who late fled before the threats
 Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improv'd
 In meditated fraud and malice, bent
 On Man's destruction, maugre what might hap
 Of heavier on himself, fearless return'd.
 By night he fled, and at midnight return'd
 From compassing the earth; cautious of day,
 Since Uriel, regent of the sun, descried 60
 His entrance, and forewarn'd the Cherubim
 That kept their watch; thence full of anguish driven,
 The space of seven continued nights he rode
 With darkness; thrice the equinoctial line
 He circled; four times cross'd the car of night
 From pole to pole, traversing each colure;¹
 On the eighth return'd; and on the coast averse
 From entrance or Cherubic watch, by stealth
 Found unsuspected way. There was a place,
 Now not, though sin, not time, first wrought the change,
 Where Tigris, at the foot of Paradise, 71
 Into a gulf shot under ground, till part
 Rose up a fountain by the tree of life:
 In with the river sunk and with it rose
 Satan, involv'd in rising mist; then sought
 Where to lie hid: sea he had search'd, and land,

¹ 'Colure:' a circle at right angles with the poles of the world.

From Eden over Pontus and the pool 77
 Mæotis, up beyond the river Ob;¹
 Downward as far antarctick: and in length,
 West from Orontes² to the ocean barr'd
 At Darien;³ thence to the land where flows
 Ganges and Indus: Thus the orb he roam'd
 With narrow search; and with inspection deep
 Consider'd every creature, which of all
 Most opportune might serve his wiles; and found
 The Serpent subtlest beast of all the field.

Him after long debate, irresolute
 Of thoughts revolv'd, his final sentence chose
 Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom
 To enter, and his dark suggestions hide 90
 From sharpest sight; for, in the wily snake
 Whatever sleights, none would suspicious mark,
 As from his wit and native subtlety
 Proceeding; which, in other beasts observ'd,
 Doubt might beget of diabolick power
 Active within, beyond the sense of brute.

Thus he resolv'd, but first from inward grief
 His bursting passion into plaints thus pour'd.
 O Earth, how like to Heaven, if not preferr'd
 More justly, seat worthier of gods, as built 100
 With second thoughts, reforming what was old!
 For what god, after better, worse would build?
 Terrestrial Heaven, danc'd round by other Heavens
 That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,
 Light above light, for thee alone, as seems,
 In thee centering all their precious beams
 Of sacred influence! As God in heaven
 Is center, yet extends to all; so thou,

¹ 'Ob:' a river of Russia, near the north pole.—² 'Orontes:' a river of Syria.—³ 'Darien:' the isthmus joining North and South America together.

Centering, receiv'st from all those orbs: in thee, 109
Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears
Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth
Of creatures animate with gradual life
Of growth, sense, reason, all summ'd up in Man.
With what delight could I have walk'd thee round,
If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange
Of hill, and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,
Now land, now sea, and shores with forest crown'd,
Rocks, dens, and caves! But I in none of these
Find place or refuge; and the more I see
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel 120
Torment within me, as from the hateful siege
Of contraries; all good to me becomes
Bane, and in Heaven much worse would be my state.
But neither here seek I, no, nor in Heaven
To dwell, unless by mastering Heaven's Supreme;
Nor hope to be myself less miserable
By what I seek, but others to make such
As I, though thereby worse to me redound:
For only in destroying I find ease
To my relentless thoughts; and, him destroy'd, 130
Or won to what may work his utter loss,
For whom all this was made, all this will soon
Follow, as to him link'd in weal or woe;
In woe then; that destruction wide may range:
To me shall be the glory sole among
The infernal Powers, in one day to have marr'd
What he, Almighty styled, six nights and days
Continued making; and who knows how long
Before had been contriving? though perhaps
Not longer than since I, in one night, freed 140
From servitude inglorious well nigh half
The Angelick name, and thinner left the throng

Of his adorers: He, to be aveng'd, 143
And to repair his numbers thus impair'd,
Whether such virtue spent of old now fail'd
More Angels to create, if they at least
Are his created, or, to spite us more,
Determin'd to advance into our room
A creature form'd of earth, and him endow,
Exalted from so base original, 150
With heavenly spoils, our spoils: What he decreed,
He effected; Man he made, and for him built
Magnificent this world, and earth his seat,
Him lord pronounc'd; and, O indignity!
Subjected to his service angel-wings,
And flaming ministers to watch and tend
Their earthly charge: Of these the vigilance
I dread; and, to elude, thus wrapt in mist
Of midnight vapour glide obscure, and pry
In every bush and brake, where hap may find 160
The serpent sleeping; in whose mazy folds
To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.
O foul descent! that I, who erst contended
With gods to sit the highest, am now constrain'd
Into a beast; and, mix'd with bestial slime,
This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
That to the highth of Deity aspir'd!
But what will not ambition and revenge
Descend to? Who aspires, must down as low
As high he soar'd; obnoxious, first or last, 170
To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils:
Let it; I reck not, so it light well aim'd,
Since higher I fall short, on him who next
Provokes my envy, this new favourite
Of Heaven, this man of clay, son of despite,

Whom, us the more to spite, his Maker rais'd 177
From dust: Spite then with spite is best repaid.

So saying, through each thicket dank or dry,
Like a black mist low-creeping, he held on
His midnight-search, where soonest he might find
The serpent: him fast sleeping soon he found
In labyrinth of many a round self-roll'd,
His head the midst, well stor'd with subtile wiles:
Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den,
Nor nocent yet; but, on the grassy herb,
Fearless unfear'd he slept: in at his mouth
The Devil enter'd; and his brutal sense,
In heart or head, possessing, soon inspir'd
With act intelligential; but his sleep 190
Disturb'd not, waiting close the approach of morn.
Now, when as sacred light began to dawn
In Eden on the humid flowers, that breath'd
Their morning incense, when all things that breathe,
From the Earth's great altar send up silent praise
To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
With grateful smell, forth came the human pair,
And join'd their vocal worship to the quire
Of creatures wanting voice; that done, partake
The season, prime for sweetest scents and airs: 200
Then commune how that day they best may ply
Their growing work: for much their work outgrew
The hands' despatch of two gardening so wide;
And Eve first to her husband thus began:

Adam, well may we labour still to dress
This garden, still to tend plant, herb, and flower,
Our pleasant task enjoin'd; but, till more hands
Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
Luxurious by restraint; what we by day
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,

One night or two with wanton growth derides 211
 Tending to wild. Thou therefore now advise,
 Or bear what to my mind first thoughts present:
 Let us divide our labours; thou where choice
 Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind
 The woodbine round this arbour, or direct
 The clasping ivy where to climb; while I,
 In yonder spring of roses intermix'd
 With myrtle, find what to redress till noon:
 For, while so near each other thus all day 220
 Our task we choose, what wonder if so near
 Looks intervene and smiles, or objects new
 Casual discourse draw on; which intermits
 Our day's work, brought to little, though begun
 Early, and the hour of supper comes unearn'd:

To whom mild answer Adam thus return'd.
 Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond
 Compare above all living creatures dear!
 Well hast thou motion'd, well thy thoughts employ'd
 How we might best fulfil the work which here 230
 God hath assign'd us; nor of me shalt pass
 Unprais'd; for nothing lovelier can be found
 In woman, than to study household good,
 And good works in her husband to promote.
 Yet not so strictly hath our Lord impos'd
 Labour, as to debar us when we need
 Refreshment, whether food or talk between,
 Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
 Of looks and smiles; for smiles from reason flow,
 To brute denied, and are of love the food; 240
 Love, not the lowest end of human life.
 For not to irksome toil, but to delight,
 He made us, and delight to reason join'd.
 These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands

Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide 245
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
Assist us: But, if much converse perhaps
Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield;
For solitude sometimes is best society,
And short retirement urges sweet return. 250

But other doubt possesses me, lest harm
Befall thee sever'd from me; for thou know'st
What hath been warn'd us, what malicious foe
Envyng our happiness, and of his own
Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame
By sly assault; and somewhere nigh at hand
Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find
His wish and best advantage, us asunder;
Hopeless to circumvent us join'd, where each
To other speedy aid might lend at need: 260

Whether his first design be to withdraw
Our fealty from God, or to disturb
Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliss
Enjoy'd by us excites his envy more;
Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side
That gave thee being, still shades thee, and protects.
The wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,
Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,
Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.

To whom the virgin majesty of Eve, 270
As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,
With sweet austere composure thus replied.

Offspring of Heaven and Earth, and all Earth's lord!
That such an enemy we have, who seeks
Our ruin, both by thee inform'd I learn,
And from the parting Angel overheard,
As in a shady nook I stood behind,
Just then return'd at shut of evening flowers.

But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt 279
 To God or thee, because we have a foe
 May tempt it, I expected not to hear.
 His violence thou fear'st not, being such
 As we, not capable of death or pain,
 Can either not receive, or can repel.
 His fraud is then thy fear; which plain infers
 Thy equal fear, that my firm faith and love
 Can by his fraud be shaken or seduc'd;
 Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy breast,
 Adam, misthought of her to thee so dear?

To whom with healing words Adam replied. 290
 Daughter of God and Man, immortal Eve!
 For such thou art; from sin and blame entire:
 Not diffident of thee do I dissuade
 Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid
 The attempt itself, intended by our foe.
 For he who tempts, though in vain, at least asperses
 The tempted with dishonour foul; suppos'd
 Not incorruptible of faith, not proof
 Against temptation: Thou thyself with scorn
 And anger wouldst resent the offer'd wrong, 300
 Though ineffectual found: misdeem not then,
 If such affront I labour to avert
 From thee alone, which on us both at once
 The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare;
 Or daring, first on me the assault shall light.
 Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;
 Subtle he needs must be who could seduce
 Angels; nor think superfluous others' aid.
 I from the influence of thy looks receive
 Access in every virtue; in thy sight 310
 More wise, more watchful, stronger if need were
 Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,

Shame to be overcome or overreach'd, 313
Would utmost vigour raise, and rais'd unite.
Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel
When I am present, and thy trial choose
With me, best witness of thy virtue tried?

So spake domestick Adam in his care
And matrimonial love; but Eve, who thought
Less átttributed to her faith sincere, 320
Thus her reply with accent sweet renew'd.

If this be our condition, thus to dwell
In narrow circuit, straiten'd by a foe,
Subtle or violent, we not endu'd
Single with like defence, wherever met;
How are we happy, still in fear of harm?
But harm precedes not sin: only our foe,
Tempting, affronts us with his foul esteem
Of our integrity: his foul esteem
Sticks no dishonour on our front, but turns 330
Foul on himself; then wherefore shunn'd or fear'd
By us? who rather double honour gain
From his surmise prov'd false; find peace within,
Favour from Heaven, our witness, from the event.
And what is faith, love, virtue, unassay'd
Alone, without exterior help sustain'd?
Let us not then suspect our happy state
Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
As not secure to single or combin'd.
Frail is our happiness, if this be so, 340
And Eden were no Eden, thus expos'd.

To whom thus Adam fervently replied.
O Woman, best are all things as the will
Of God ordain'd them: His creating hand
Nothing imperfect or deficient left
Of all that he created, much less Man,

Or aught that might his happy state secure, 347
 Secure from outward force: within himself
 The danger lies, yet lies within his power:
 Against his will he can receive no harm.
 But God left free the will; for what obeys
 Reason, is free; and Reason he made right,
 But bid her well beware, and still erect;
 Lest, by some fair-appearing good surpris'd,
 She dictate false; and misinform the will
 To do what God expressly hath forbid.
 Not then mistrust, but tender love, enjoins
 That I should mind thee oft; and mind thou me.
 Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve;
 Since Reason not impossibly may meet 360
 Some specious object by the foe suborn'd,
 And fall into deception unaware,
 Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warn'd.
 Seek not temptation then, which to avoid
 Were better, and most likely if from me
 Thou sever not: Trial will come unsought.
 Wouldst thou approve thy constancy, approve
 First thy obedience; the other who can know,
 Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?
 But if thou think, trial unsought may find 370
 Us both securer than thus warn'd thou seem'st,
 Go, for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;
 Go in thy native innocence; rely
 On what thou hast of virtue; summon all!
 For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine.

So spake the patriarch of mankind; but Eve
 Persisted; yet submiss, though last, replied:

With thy permission, then, and thus forewarn'd,
 Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words
 Touch'd only; that our trial, when least sought,

May find us both perhaps far less prepar'd, 381
 The willinger I go, nor much expect
 A foe so proud will first the weaker seek;
 So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse.

Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand
 Soft she withdrew; and, like a Wood-Nymph light,
 Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's¹ train,
 Betook her to the groves; but Delia's self
 In gait surpass'd, and goddess-like deport,
 Though not as she with bow and quiver arm'd, 390
 But with such gardening tools as Art yet rude,
 Guiltless of fire, had form'd, or Angels brought.
 To Pales, or Pomona,² thus adorn'd,
 Likest she seem'd Pomona when she fled
 Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime,
 Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.
 Her long with ardent look his eye pursu'd
 Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
 Oft he to her his charge of quick return
 Repeated; she to him as oft engag'd 400
 To be return'd by noon amid the bower,
 And all things in best order to invite
 Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.
 O much deceiv'd, much failing, hapless Eve,
 Of thy presum'd return! event perverse!
 Thou never from that hour in Paradise
 Found'st either sweet repast or sound repose;
 Such ambush, hid among sweet flowers and shades,
 Waited with hellish rancour imminent
 To intercept thy way, or send thee back, 410
 Despoil'd of innocence, of faith, of bliss.
 For now, and since first break of dawn, the Fiend,

¹ 'Delia:' Diana.—² 'Pales, Pomona, Ceres:' heathen goddesses, presiding over fruits, gardening, and husbandry.

Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come; 413
 And on his quest, where likeliest he might find
 The only two of mankind, but in them
 The whole included race, his purpos'd prey,
 In bower and field he sought, where any tuft
 Of grove or garden plot more pleasant lay,
 Their tendance, or plantation for delight;
 By fountain or by shady rivulet 420
 He sought them both, but wish'd his hap might find
 Eve separate; he wish'd, but not with hope
 Of what so seldom chanc'd; when to his wish,
 Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
 Veil'd in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,
 Half spied, so thick the roses bushing round
 About her glow'd, oft stooping to support
 Each flower of slender stalk, whose head, though gay
 Carnation, purple, azure; or speck'd with gold,
 Hung drooping unsustain'd; them she upstays 430
 Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while
 Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,
 From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.
 Nearer he drew, and many a walk travérs'd
 Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm;
 Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen,
 Among thick-woven arborets, and flowers
 Imborder'd on each bank, the hand of Eve:
 Spot more delicious than those gardens¹ feign'd,
 Or of revived Adonis, or renown'd 440
 Alcinous,² host of old Laertes' son;
 Or that, not mystic, where the sapient king³
 Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse.

¹ 'Gardens of Adonis:' small earthen pots of lettuces carried at the festivals in honour of Adonis.—² 'Alcinous:' see the *Odyssey*.—³ 'Sapient king:' Solomon.

Much he the place admir'd, the person more. 444
As one who long in populous city pent,
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe
Among the pleasant villages and farms
Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight;
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine, 450
Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;
If chance, with nymph-like step, fair virgin pass,
What pleasing seem'd, for her now pleases more;
She most, and in her look sums all delight:
Such pleasure took the Serpent to behold
This flowery plat, the sweet recess of Eve
Thus early, thus alone: Her heavenly form
Angelick, but more soft and feminine,
Her graceful innocence, her every air
Of gesture or least action, overaw'd 460
His malice, and with rapine sweet bereav'd
His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought:
That space the Evil-one abstracted stood
From his own evil, and for the time remain'd
Stupidly good; of enmity disarm'd,
Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge:
But the hot Hell that always in him burns,
Though in mid Heaven, soon ended his delight,
And tortures him now more, the more he sees
Of pleasure not for him ordain'd; then soon 470
Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites.

Thoughts, whither have ye led me! with what sweet
Compulsion thus transported, to forget
What hither brought us! hate, not love; nor hope
Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste
Of pleasure; but all pleasure to destroy,

Save what is in destroying; other joy
 To me is lost. Then, let me not let pass
 Occasion which now smiles; behold alone
 The woman, opportune to all attempts,
 Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,
 Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
 And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb
 Heroick built, though of terrestrial mould;
 Foe not formidable! exempt from wound,
 I not; so much hath Hell debas'd, and pain
 Enfeebled me, to what I was in Heaven.
 She fair, divinely fair, fit love for gods!
 Not terrible, though terrour be in love¹ 490
 And beauty, not approach'd by stronger hate,
 Hate stronger under show of love well feign'd;
 The way which to her ruin now I tend.

So spake the enemy of mankind enclos'd
 In serpent, inmate bad! and toward Eve
 Address'd his way: not with indented wave,
 Prone on the ground, as since; but on his rear,
 Circular base of rising folds that tower'd
 Fold above fold, a surging maze! his head
 Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes; 500
 With burnish'd neck of verdant gold, erect
 Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
 Floated redundant: pleasing was his shape
 And lovely; never since of serpent-kind
 Lovelier; not those that in Illyria chang'd
 Hermione and Cadmus,² or the god
 In Epidaurus;³ nor to which transform'd

¹ 'Terroure be in love,' &c.: i. e., a beautiful woman begets terror, unless you approach her with a hatred that overpowers fear.—² 'Hermione and Cadmus' were changed into serpents for having slain one sacred to Mars.—³ 'God in Epidaurus:' Esculapius, who was worshipped there.

Ammonian Jove,¹ or Capitoline,² was seen; 508
 He with Olympias; this with her who bore
 Scipio, the highth of Rome. With tract oblique
 At first, as one who sought access, but fear'd
 To interrupt, sidelong he works his way.
 As when a ship, by skilful steersman wrought
 Nigh river's mouth, or foreland, where the wind
 Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail:
 So varied he, and of his tortuous train
 Curl'd many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,
 To lure her eye; she, busied, heard the sound
 Of rustling leaves, but minded not, as us'd
 To such disport before her through the field, 520
 From every beast; more duteous at her call
 Than at Circean call the herd disguis'd.
 He, bolder now, uncall'd before her stood,
 But as in gaze admiring: oft he bow'd
 His turret crest, and sleek enamell'd neck,
 Fawning; and lick'd the ground whereon she trod.
 His gentle dumb expression turn'd at length
 The eye of Eve to mark his play; he, glad
 Of her attention gain'd, with serpent-tongue
 Organic, or impulse of vocal air, 530
 His fraudulent temptation thus began:

Wonder not, sovran Mistress, if perhaps
 Thou canst, who art sole wonder! much less arm
 Thy looks, the Heaven of mildness, with disdain,
 Displeas'd that I approach thee thus, and gaze
 Insatiate; I thus single; nor have fear'd
 Thy awful brow, more awful thus retir'd.
 Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,
 Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine

¹ 'Ammonian Jove:' pretended father of Alexander the Great.—² 'Capitoline:' pretended father of Scipio Africanus.

By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore 540
 With ravishment beheld! there best beheld,
 Where universally admir'd; but here
 In this enclosure wild, these beasts among,
 Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
 Half what in thee is fair, one man except,
 Who sees thee? (and what is one?) who should be seen
 A goddess among gods, ador'd and serv'd
 By Angels numberless, thy daily train.

So glaz'd the Tempter, and his proem tun'd:
 Into the heart of Eve his words made way, 550
 Though at the voice much marvelling; at length,
 Not unamaz'd, she thus in answer spake.

What may this mean? language of man pronounc'd
 By tongue of brute, and human sense express'd?
 The first, at least, of these I thought denied
 To beasts; whom God, on their creation-day,
 Created mute to all articulate sound:
 The latter I demur; for in their looks
 Much reason, and in their actions, oft appears.
 Thee, Serpent, subtlest beast of all the field 560
 I knew, but not with human voice endu'd;
 Redouble then this miracle, and say
 How cam'st thou speakable of mute, and how
 To me so friendly grown above the rest
 Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight?
 Say, for such wonder claims attention due.

To whom the guileful Tempter thus replied.
 Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve!
 Easy to me it is to tell thee all
 What thou command'st; and right thou should'st be obey'd:
 I was at first as other beasts that graze 571
 The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,
 As was my food; nor aught but food discern'd

Or sex, and apprehended nothing high: 571
Till, on a day roving the field, I chanc'd
A goodly tree far distant to behold,
Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mix'd,
Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to gaze;
When from the boughs a savoury odour blown,
Grateful to appetite, more pleas'd my sense 580
Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats
Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at even,
Unsuck'd of lamb or kid, that tend their play.
To satisfy the sharp desire I had
Of tasting those fair apples, I resolv'd
Not to defer; hunger and thirst at once,
Powerful persuaders, quicken'd at the scent
Of that alluring fruit, urg'd me so keen.
About the mossy trunk I wound me soon;
For, high from ground, the branches would require 590
Thy utmost reach or Adam's: Round the tree
All other beasts that saw, with like desire
Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.
Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill
I spar'd not; for, such pleasure till that hour,
At feed or fountain, never had I found.
Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
Strange alteration in me, to degree
Of reason in my inward power; and speech 600
Wanted not long; though to this shape retain'd.
Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
I turn'd my thoughts, and with capacious mind
Consider'd all things visible in Heaven,
Or Earth, or Middle; all things fair and good:
But all that fair and good in thy divine
Semblance, and in thy beauty's heavenly ray,

United I beheld; no fair to thine
Equivalent or second; which compell'd
Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come
And gaze, and worship thee of right declar'd
Sovran of creatures, universal Dame!

So talk'd the spirited sly Snake; and Eve,
Yet more amaz'd, unwary thus replied.

Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt
The virtue of that fruit, in thee first prov'd:
But say, where grows the tree? from hence how far?
For many are the trees of God that grow
In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
To us; in such abundance lies our choice,
As leaves a greater store of fruit untouch'd,
Still hanging incorruptible, till men
Grow up to their provision, and more hands
Help to disburden Nature of her birth.

To whom the wily Adder, blithe and glad.
Empress, the way is ready, and not long;
Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,
Fast by a fountain, one small thicket past
Of blowing myrrh and balm: if thou accept
My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon.

Lead then, said Eve. He, leading, swiftly roll'd
In tangles, and made intricate seem straight,
To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy
Brightens his crest; as when a wandering fire,
Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night
Condenses, and the cold environs round
Kindled through agitation to a flame,
Which oft, they say, some evil Spirit attends,
Hovering and blazing with delusive light,
Misleads the amaz'd night wanderer from his way
To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool,

There swallow'd up and lost, from succour far. 642
So glister'd the dire Snake, and into fraud
Led Eve, our credulous mother, to the tree
Of prohibition, root of all our woe;
Which, when she saw, thus to her guide she spake.

Serpent, we might have spar'd our coming hither,
Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess,
The credit of whose virtue rest with thee;
Wonderous indeed, if cause of such effects. 650
But of this tree we may not taste nor touch;
God so commanded, and left that command
Sole daughter of his voice; the rest, we live
Law to ourselves; our reason is our law.

To whom the Tempter guilefully replied.
Indeed? hath God then said that of the fruit
Of all these garden trees ye shall not eat,
Yet lords declar'd of all in earth or air?
To whom thus Eve, yet sinless. Of the fruit
Of each tree in the garden we may eat; 660
But of the fruit of this fair tree amidst
The garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

She scarce had said, though brief, when now more bold
The Tempter, but with show of zeal and love
To man, and indignation at his wrong,
New part puts on; and, as to passion mov'd,
Fluctuates disturb'd, yet comely and in act
Rais'd, as of some great matter to begin.
As when of old some orator renown'd, 670
In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence
Flourish'd, since mute! to some great cause address'd,
Stood in himself collected; while each part,
Motion, each act, won audience ere the tongue;
Sometimes in highth began, as no delay

Of preface brooking, through his zeal of right: 676
So standing, moving, or to highth upgrown,
The Tempter, all impassion'd, thus began.

O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving Plant,
Mother of science! now I feel thy power
Within me clear; not only to discern
Things in their causes, but to trace the ways
Of highest agents, deem'd however wise.
Queen of this universe! do not believe
Those rigid threats of death: ye shall not die:
How should you? By the fruit? it gives you life
To knowledge; by the threatener? look on me,
Me, who have touch'd and tasted; yet both live,
And life more perfect have attain'd than Fate
Meant me, by venturing higher than my lot. 690
Shall that be shut to Man, which to the Beast
Is open? or will God incense his ire
For such a petty trespass? and not praise
Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain
Of death denounc'd, whatever thing death be,
Deterr'd not from achieving what might lead
To happier life, knowledge of good and evil;
Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil
Be real, why not known, since easier shunn'd?
God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just; 700
Not just, not God; not fear'd then, nor obey'd:
Your fear itself of death removes the fear.
Why then was this forbid? Why, but to awe?
Why, but to keep ye low and ignorant,
His worshippers? He knows that in the day
Ye eat thereof, your eyes, that seem so clear,
Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then
Open'd and clear'd, and ye shall be as gods,
Knowing both good and evil, as they know.

That ye shall be as gods, since I as man, 710
Internal man, is but proportion meet;
I, of brute, human; ye, of human, gods.
So ye shall die, perhaps, by putting off
Human, to put on gods; death to be wish'd,
Though threaten'd, which no worse than this can bring.
And what are gods, that man may not become
As they, participating God-like food?
The gods are first, and that advantage use
On our belief, that all from them proceeds:
I question it; for this fair earth I see, 720
Warm'd by the sun, producing every kind;
Them, nothing: if they all things, who enclos'd
Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,
That whoso eats thereof forthwith attains
Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies
The offence, that man should thus attain to know?
What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree
Impart against his will, if all be his?
Or is it envy? and can envy dwell
In heavenly breasts? These, these, and many more 730
Causes, import your need of this fair fruit.
Goddess humane, reach then, and freely taste.

He ended; and his words, replete with guile,
Into her heart too easy entrance won:
Fix'd on the fruit she gaz'd, which to behold
Might tempt alone; and in her ears the sound
Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregn'd
With reason, to her seeming, and with truth:
Meanwhile the hour of noon drew on, and wak'd
An eager appetite, rais'd by the smell 740
So savoury of that fruit, which with desire,
Inclinable now grown to touch or taste,

Solicited her longing eye; yet first 743
Pausing awhile, thus to herself she mus'd.

Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits,
Though kept from man, and worthy to be admir'd;
Whose taste, too long forborne, at first assay
Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
The tongue not made for speech to speak thy praise:
Thy praise he also, who forbids thy use 750

Conceals not from us, naming thee the tree
Of knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;
Forbids us then to taste! but his forbidding
Commends thee more, while it infers the good
By thee communicated, and our want:
For good unknown, sure is not had; or, had
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.

In plain then, what forbids he but to know,
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?
Such prohibitions bind not. But, if death 760
Bind us with after-bands, what profits then
Our inward freedom? In the day we eat
Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die!
How dies the Serpent? he hath eat'n and lives,
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,
Irrational till then. For us alone

Was death invented? or to us denied
This intellectual food, for beasts reserv'd?
For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which first 770
Hath tasted envies not, but brings with joy
The good befallen him, author unsuspect,
Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.
What fear I then? rather, what know to fear
Under this ignorance of good and evil,
Of God or death, of law or penalty?
Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,

Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste, 777
Of virtue to make wise: What hinders, then,
To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?

So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
Forth reaching to the fruit, she pluck'd, she eat!
Earth felt the wound; and Nature from her seat,
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe
That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk
The guilty Serpent; and well might; for Eve,
Intent now wholly on her taste, nought else
Regarded; such delight till then, as seem'd,
In fruit she never tasted, whether true
Or fancied so, through expectation high
Of knowledge; nor was Godhead from her thought. 790
Greedily she ingorg'd without restraint,
And knew not eating death: Sate at length,
And highten'd as with wine, jocund and boon,
Thus to herself she pleasingly began.

O sovran, virtuous, precious of all trees
In Paradise! of operation blest
To sapience, hitherto obscur'd, infam'd,
And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
Created; but henceforth my early care,
Not without song, each morning, and due praise, 800
Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
Of thy full branches offer'd free to all;
Till, dieted by thee, I grow mature
In knowledge, as the gods, who all things know;
Though others envy what they cannot give:
For had the gift been theirs, it had not here
Thus grown. Experience, next, to thee I owe,
Best guide; not following thee, I had remain'd
In ignorance; thou open'st Wisdom's way,
And giv'st access, though secret she retire.

And I perhaps am secret: Heaven is high, 811
 High, and remote to see from thence distinct
 Each thing on Earth; and other care perhaps
 May have diverted from continual watch
 Our Great Forbidder, safe with all his spies
 About him. But to Adam in what sort
 Shall I appear? shall I to him make known
 As yet my change, and give him to partake
 Full happiness with me? or rather not,
 But keep the odds of knowledge in my power 820
 Without copartner? so to add what wants
 In female sex, the more to draw his love,
 And render me more equal; and perhaps,
 A thing not undesirable, sometime
 Superiour; for, inferiour, who is free?
 This may be well: But what if God have seen,
 And death ensue? then I shall be no more!
 And Adam, wedded to another Eve,
 Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;
 A death to think! Confirm'd then I resolve, 830
 Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:
 So dear I love him, that with him all deaths
 I could endure, without him live no life.

So saying, from the tree her step she turn'd;
 But first low reverence done, as to the Power
 That dwelt within, whose presence had infus'd
 Into the plant scintial sap, deriv'd
 From nectar, drink of gods. Adam the while,
 Waiting desirous her return, had wove
 Of choicest flowers a garland, to adorn 840
 Her tresses, and her rural labours crown;
 As reapers oft are wont their harvest queen.
 Great joy he promis'd to his thoughts, and new
 Solace in her return, so long delay'd;

Yet oft his heart, divine of¹ something ill, 845
 Misgave him; he the faltering measure² felt;
 And forth to meet her went, the way she took
 That morn when first they parted; by the tree
 Of knowledge he must pass; there he her met,
 Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand 850
 A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smil'd,
 New gather'd, and ambrosial smell diffus'd.
 To him she hasted; in her face excuse
 Came prologue, and apology too prompt;
 Which, with bland words at will, she thus address'd.

Hast thou not wonder'd, Adam, at my stay?
 Thee I have miss'd, and thought it long, depriv'd
 Thy presence; agony of love till now
 Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more
 Mean I to try, what rash untried I sought, 860
 The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange
 Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear:
 This tree is not, as we are told, a tree
 Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown
 Opening the way, but of divine effect
 To open eyes, and make them gods who taste;
 And hath been tasted such: The serpent wise,
 Or not restrain'd as we, or not obeying,
 Hath eaten of the fruit; and is become,
 Not dead, as we are threaten'd, but thenceforth 870
 Endu'd with human voice and human sense,
 Reasoning to admiration; and with me
 Persuasively hath so prevail'd, that I
 Have also tasted, and have also found
 The effects to correspond; opener mine eyes,
 Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,

¹ 'Divine of:' foreboding.—² 'Faltering measure:' unequal beatings of heart and pulse.

And growing up to Godhead; which for thee . 877
 Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
 For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss;
 Tedious, unshar'd with thee, and odious soon.
 Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot
 May join us, equal joy, as equal love;
 Lest, thou not tasting, different degree
 Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce
 Deity for thee, when Fate will not permit.

Thus Eve with countenance blithe her story told;
 But in her cheek distemper flushing glow'd.
 On the other side Adam, soon as he heard
 The fatal trespass done by Eve, amaz'd,
 Astonied stood, and blank, while horror chill 890
 Ran through his veins, and all his joints relax'd;
 From his slack hand the garland wreath'd for Eve
 Down dropt, and all the faded roses shed:
 Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length
 First to himself he inward silence broke.

O fairest of Creation, last and best
 Of all God's works, Creature in whom excell'd
 Whatever can to sight or thought be form'd,
 Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!
 How art thou lost! how on a sudden lost, 900
 Defac'd, deflower'd, and now to death devote!
 Rather, how hast thou yielded to transgress
 The strict forbiddence, how to violate
 The sacred fruit forbidd'n! Some cursed fraud
 Of enemy hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown,
 And me with thee hath ruin'd; for with thee
 Certain my resolution is to die:
 How can I live without thee! how forego
 Thy sweet converse, and love so dearly join'd,
 To live again in these wild woods forlorn!

Should God create another Eve, and I 911
Another rib afford, yet loss of thee
Would never from my heart: no, no! I feel
The link of Nature draw me: flesh of flesh,
Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe.

So having said, as one from sad dismay
Recomforted, and after thoughts disturb'd
Submitting to what seem'd remediless,
Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turn'd. 920

Bold deed thou hast presum'd, adventurous Eve,
And peril great provok'd, who thus hast dar'd,
Had it been only coveting to eye
That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence,
Much more to taste it under ban to touch.
But past who can recall, or done undo?
Not God omnipotent, nor Fate; yet so
Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fact
Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,
Profan'd first by the serpent, by him first 930
Made common, and unhallow'd, ere our taste;
Nor yet on him found deadly; he yet lives,
Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to live, as Man,
Higher degree of life; inducement strong
To us, as likely tasting to attain
Proportional ascent; which cannot be
But to be gods, or angels, demigods.
Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,
Though threatening, will in earnest so destroy
Us his prime creatures, dignified so high, 940
Set over all his works; which in our fall,
For us created, needs with us must fail,
Dependent made: so God shall uncreate,
Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour lose;

Not well conceiv'd of God, who, though his power 945
 Creation could repeat, yet would be loath
 Us to abolish, lest the Adversary
 Triumph, and say, "Fickle their state whom God
 Most favours; who can please him long? Me first
 He ruin'd, now Mankind; whom will he next?" 950
 Matter of scorn, not to be given the Foe.
 However, I with thee have fix'd my lot,
 Certain to undergo like doom: If death
 Consort with thee, death is to me as life;
 So forcible within my heart I feel
 The bond of Nature draw me to my own;
 My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;
 Our state cannot be sever'd; we are one,
 One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself.

So Adam; and thus Eve to him replied. 960
 O glorious trial of exceeding love,
 Illustrious evidence, example high!
 Engaging me to emulate; but, short
 Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,
 Adam, from whose dear side I boast me sprung,
 And gladly of our union hear thee speak,
 One heart, one soul in both; whereof good proof
 This day affords, declaring thee resolv'd
 Rather than death, or aught than death more dread,
 Shall separate us, link'd in love so dear, 970
 To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
 If any be, of tasting this fair fruit;
 Whose virtue (for of good still good proceeds,
 Direct, or by occasion) hath presented
 This happy trial of thy love, which else
 So eminently never had been known?
 Were it I thought death menac'd would ensue
 This my attempt, I would sustain alone

The worst, and not persuade thee, rather die 979
 Deserted, than oblige¹ thee with a fact
 Pernicious to thy peace; chiefly assur'd
 Remarkably so late of thy so true,
 So faithful, love unequall'd: but I feel
 Far otherwise the event; not death, but life
 Augmented, open'd eyes, new hopes, new joys,
 Taste so divine, that what of sweet before
 Hath touch'd my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.
 On my experience, Adam, freely taste,
 And fear of death deliver to the winds.

So saying, she embrac'd him, and for joy 990
 Tenderly wept; much won, that he his love
 Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur
 Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.
 In recompence (for such compliance bad
 Such recompence best merits), from the bough
 She gave him of that fair enticing fruit
 With liberal hand: he scrupled not to eat,
 Against his better knowledge; not deceiv'd,
 But fondly overcome with female charm.

Earth trembled from her entrails, as again 1000
 In pangs; and Nature gave a second groan;
 Sky lower'd; and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
 Wept at completing of the mortal sin
 Original: while Adam took no thought,
 Eating his fill; nor Eve to iterate
 Her former trespass fear'd, the more to soothe
 Him with her lov'd society; that now,
 As with new wine intoxicated both,
 They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
 Divinity within them breeding wings, 1010
 Wherewith to scorn the earth: But that false fruit

¹ 'Oblige:' in its old sense of rendering obnoxious to punishment.

Far other operation first display'd, 1012
 Carnal desire inflaming; he on Eve
 Began to cast lascivious eyes; she him
 As wantonly repaid: in lust they burn:
 Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move.

Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
 And elegant, of sapience no small part;
 Since to each meaning savour we apply,
 And palate call judicious: I the praise 1020
 Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purvey'd.
 Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstain'd
 From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
 True relish, tasting; if such pleasure be
 In things to us forbidd'n, it might be wish'd
 For this one tree had been forbidden ten.
 But come, so well refresh'd, now let us play,
 As meet is, after such delicious fare;
 For never did thy beauty, since the day
 I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorn'd 1030
 With all perfections, so inflame my sense
 With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now
 Than ever; bounty of this virtuous tree!

So said he, and forbore not glance or toy
 Of amorous intent; well understood
 Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.
 Her hand he seiz'd; and to a shady bank,
 Thick overhead with verdant roof imbower'd,
 He led her nothing loth; flowers were the couch,
 Pansies, and violets, and asphodel, 1040
 And hyacinth; Earth's freshest, softest lap.
 There they their fill of love and love's disport
 Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
 The solace of their sin; till dewy sleep
 Oppress'd them, wearied with their amorous play.

Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit, 1046
That with exhilarating vapour bland
About their spirits had play'd, and inmost powers
Made err, was now exhal'd; and grosser sleep,
Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams
Incumber'd, now had left them; up they rose
As from unrest; and, each the other viewing,
Soon found their eyes how open'd, and their minds
How darken'd; innocence, that as a veil
Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gone;
Just confidence, and native righteousness,
And honour, from about them, naked left
To guilty Shame: he cover'd, but his robe
Uncover'd more. So rose the Danite strong,
Herculean Samson, from the harlot-lap 1060
Of Philistéan Dalilah, and wak'd
Shorn of his strength. They destitute and bare
Of all their virtue: Silent, and in face
Confounded, long they sat, as stricken mute;
Till Adam, though not less than Eve abash'd,
At length gave utterance to these words constrain'd.

O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give ear
To that false worm, of whomsoever taught
To counterfeit Man's voice; true in our fall,
False in our promis'd rising; since our eyes 1070
Open'd we find indeed, and find we know
Both good and evil; good lost, and evil got;
Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know;
Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,
Of innocence, of faith, of purity,
Our wonted ornaments now soil'd and stain'd,
And in our faces evident the signs
Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store;
Even shame, the last of evils; of the first

Be sure then.—How shall I behold the face 1080
 Henceforth of God or angel, erst with joy
 And rapture so oft beheld? Those heavenly shapes
 Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze,
 Insufferably bright. O might I here
 In solitude live savage, in some glade
 Obscur'd, where highest woods, impenetrable
 To star or sunlight, spread their umbrage broad
 And brown as evening: Cover me, ye Pines!
 Ye Cedars, with innumerable boughs
 Hide me, where I may never see them more!— 1090
 But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
 What best may for the present serve to hide
 The parts of each from other that seem most
 To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen;
 Some tree, whose broad smooth leaves together sew'd,
 And girded on our loins, may cover round
 Those middle parts; that this new-comer, Shame,
 There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.

So counsell'd he, and both together went
 Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose 1100
 The fig-tree; not that kind for fruit renown'd,
 But such¹ as at this day, to Indians known
 In Malabar or Decan spreads her arms,
 Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
 The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
 About the mother tree, a pillar'd shade
 High over-arch'd, and echoing walks between:
 There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,
 Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
 At loopholes cut through thickest shade: Those leaves
 They gather'd, broad as Amazonian targe; 1111
 And, with what skill they had, together sew'd,

¹ 'But such,' &c.: namely, the banyan tree.

To gird their waist; vain covering, if to hide 1113
Their guilt and dreaded shame! O how unlike
To that first naked glory! Such of late
Columbus found the American, so girt
With feather'd cincture; naked else, and wild
Among the trees, on isles and woody shores.
Thus fenc'd, and, as they thought, their shame in part
Cover'd, but not at rest or ease of mind, 1120
They sat them down to weep; nor only tears
Rain'd at their eyes, but high winds worse within
Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,
Mistrust, suspicion, discord; and shook sore
Their inward state of mind, calm region once
And full of peace, now tost and turbulent:
For Understanding rul'd not, and the Will
Heard not her lore; both in subjection now
To sensual Appetite, who, from beneath,
Usurping, over sovran Reason claim'd 1130
Superiour sway: From thus distemper'd breast,
Adam, estrang'd in look, and alter'd style,
Speech intermitted thus to Eve renew'd.

Would thou hadst hearken'd to my words, and stay'd
With me, as I besought thee, when that strange
Desire of wandering this unhappy morn,
I know not whence possess'd thee; we had then
Remain'd still happy; not, as now, despoil'd
Of all our good, sham'd, naked, miserable!
Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve
The faith they owe: when earnestly they seek 1141
Such proof, conclude they then begin to fail.

To whom, soon mov'd with touch of blame, thus Eve.
What words have pass'd thy lips, Adam severe!
Imputest thou that to my default, or will
Of wandering, as thou call'st it, which who knows

But might as ill have happened, thou being by, 1147
Or to thyself perhaps? Hadst thou been there,
Or here the attempt, thou couldst not have discern'd
Fraud in the serpent, speaking as he spake;
No ground of enmity between us known,
Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.
Was I to have never parted from thy side?
As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.
Being as I am, why didst not thou, the head,
Command me absolutely not to go,
Going into such danger, as thou saidst?
Too facile then, thou didst not much gainsay;
Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
Hadst thou been firm and fix'd in thy dissent, 1160
Neither had I transgress'd, nor thou with me.

To whom, then first incens'd, Adam replied.
Is this the love, is this the recompence
Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve! express'd
Immutable, when thou wert lost, not I;
Who might have liv'd, and 'joyed immortal bliss,
Yet willingly chose rather death with thee?
And am I now upbraided as the cause
Of thy transgressing? Not enough severe,
It seems, in thy restraint: What could I more? 1170
I warn'd thee, I admonish'd thee, foretold
The danger, and the lurking enemy
That lay in wait; beyond this had been force;
And force upon free will hath here no place.
But confidence then bore thee on, secure
Either to meet no danger, or to find
Matter of glorious trial; and perhaps
I also err'd, in overmuch admiring
What seem'd in thee so perfect, that I thought
No evil durst attempt thee; but I rue

That errour now, which is become my crime, 1181
And thou the accuser. Thus it shall befall
Him who, to worth in women overtrusting,
Lets her will rule; restraint she will not brook;
And left to herself, if evil thence ensue,
She first his weak indulgence will accuse.

Thus they in mutual accusation spent
The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning;
And of their vain contést appeared no end.

BOOK X.

THE ARGUMENT

Man's transgression known, the guardian angels forsake Paradise, and return up to heaven to approve their vigilance, and are approved; God declaring that the entrance of Satan could not be by them prevented. He sends his Son to judge the transgressors; who descends and gives sentence accordingly; then in pity clothes them both, and reascends. Sin and Death, sitting till then at the gates of hell, by wondrous sympathy feeling the success of Satan in this new world, and the sin by man there committed, resolve to sit no longer confined in hell, but to follow Satan their sire up to the place of man: to make the way easier from hell to this world to and fro, they pave a broad highway or bridge over Chaos, according to the track that Satan first made; then preparing for earth, they meet him, proud of his success, returning to hell; their mutual gratulation. Satan arrives at Pandemonium; in full assembly relates with boasting his success against man; instead of applause is entertained with a general hiss by all his audience, transformed with himself also suddenly into serpents, according to his doom given in Paradise; then, deluded with a show of the forbidden tree springing up before them, they, greedily reaching to take of the fruit, chew dust and bitter ashes. The proceedings of Sin and Death; God foretells the final victory of his Son over them, and the renewing of all things; but, for the present, commands his angels to make several alterations in the heavens and elements. Adam, more and more perceiving his fallen condition, heavily bewails, rejects the condolment of Eve; she persists, and at length appeases him; then to evade the curse likely to fall on their offspring, proposes to Adam violent ways, which he approves not; but conceiving better hope, puts her in mind of the late promise made them, that her seed should be revenged on the serpent; and exhorts her with him to seek peace of the offended Deity, by repentance and supplication.

MEANWHILE the heinous and despiteful act
Of Satan done in Paradise; and how
He, in the serpent, had perverted Eve,
Her husband she, to taste the fatal fruit,
Was known in Heaven; for what can 'scape the eye
Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart
Omniscient? who in all things wise and just,

Hinder'd not Satan to attempt the mind 8
Of man, with strength entire and free-will arm'd,
Complete to have discover'd and repuls'd,
Whatever wiles of foe or seeming friend.
For still they knew, and ought to have still remember'd,
The high injunction not to taste that fruit,
Whoever tempted; which they not obeying,
Incurr'd (what could they less?) the penalty;
And, manifold in sin, deserv'd to fall.

Up into Heaven, from Paradise, in haste
The Angelick guards ascended, mute, and sad
For Man; for of his state by this they knew,
Much wondering how the subtle Fiend had stolen 20
Entrance unseen. Soon as the unwelcome news
From Earth arriv'd at Heaven-gate, displeas'd
All were who heard: dim sadness did not spare
That time celestial visages, yet, mix'd
With pity, violated not their bliss.
About the new arriv'd, in multitudes
The ethereal people ran, to hear and know
How all befel: They towards the throne supreme,
Accountable, made haste, to make appear,
With righteous plea, their utmost vigilance, 30
And easily approv'd: when the Most High
Eternal Father, from his secret cloud
Amidst, in thunder utter'd thus his voice.

Assembled Angels, and ye Powers return'd
From unsuccessful charge; be not dismay'd,
Nor troubled at these tidings from the earth,
Which your sincerest care could not prevent;
Foretold so lately what would come to pass,
When first this tempter cross'd the gulf from Hell.
I told ye then he should prevail, and speed 40
On his bad errand; Man should be seduc'd,

And flatter'd out of all, believing lies 42
 Against his Maker; no decree of mine
 Concurring to necessitate his fall,
 Or touch with lightest moment of impulse
 His free will, to her own inclining left
 In even scale. But fallen he is; and now
 What rests, but that the mortal sentence pass
 On his transgression, death denounc'd that day?
 Which he presumes already vain and void, 50
 Because not yet inflicted, as he fear'd,
 By some immediate stroke; but soon shall find
 Forbearance no acquittance, ere day end.
 Justice shall not return as bounty scorn'd.
 But whom send I to judge them? Whom but thee,
 Vicegerent Son? To thee I have transferr'd
 All judgement, whether in Heaven, or Earth, or Hell.
 Easy it may be seen that I intend
 Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee,
 Man's friend, his Mediator, his design'd 60
 Both ransom and Redeemer voluntary,
 And destin'd Man himself, to judge Man fallen.

So spake the Father, and, unfolding bright
 Toward the right hand his glory, on the Son
 Blaz'd forth unclouded Deity: He full
 Resplendent all his Father manifest
 Express'd, and thus divinely answer'd mild.

Father Eternal, thine is to decree;
 Mine, both in Heaven and Earth, to do thy will
 Supreme; that thou in me, thy Son belov'd, 70
 May'st ever rest well pleas'd. I go to judge
 On Earth these thy transgressors; but thou know'st,
 Whoever judg'd, the worst on me must light
 When time shall be; for so I undertook
 Before thee; and, not repenting, this obtain

Of right, that I may mitigate their doom 76
 On me deriv'd: yet I shall temper so
 Justice with mercy, as may illustrate most
 Them fully satisfied, and thee appease.
 Attendance none shall need, nor train, where none
 Are to behold the judgement, but the judg'd,
 Those two; the third, best absent, is condemn'd,
 Convict by flight, and rebel to all law:
 Conviction to the serpent none belongs.

Thus saying, from his radiant seat he rose,
 Of high collateral glory: Him Thrones, and Powers,
 Princedoms, and Dominations ministrant,
 Accompanied to Heaven-gate; from whence
 Eden, and all the coast, in prospect lay.
 Down he descended straight: the speed of gods 90
 Time counts not, though with swiftest minutes wing'd.
 Now was the sun in western cadence low
 From noon, and gentle airs, due at their hour,
 To fan the earth now wak'd, and usher in
 The evening cool; when he, from wrath more cool,
 Came, the mild Judge and Intercessour both,
 To sentence Man: The voice of God they heard,
 Now walking in the garden, by soft winds
 Brought to their ears while day declin'd; they heard,
 And from his presence hid themselves among 100
 The thickest trees, both man and wife; till God
 Approaching, thus to Adam call'd aloud.

Where art thou, Adam, wont with joy to meet
 My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,
 Not pleas'd, thus entertain'd with solitude,
 Where obvious duty erewhile appear'd unsought:
 Or come I less conspicuous, or what change
 Absents thee, or what chance detains? Come forth!

He came, and with him Eve, more loth, though first

To offend; discountenanc'd both, and discompos'd: 110
Love was not in their looks, either to God
Or to each other; but apparent guilt,
And shame, and perturbation, and despair,
Anger, and obstinacy, and hate, and guile.
Whence Adam, faltering long, thus answer'd brief.

I heard thee in the garden, and of thy voice
Afraid, being naked, hid myself. To whom
The gracious Judge, without revile, replied.

My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not fear'd,
But still rejoic'd; how is it now become 120
So dreadful to thee? That thou art naked, who
Hath told thee? Hast thou eaten of the tree,
Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat?

To whom thus Adam, sore beset, replied.
O Heaven! in evil strait this day I stand
Before my Judge; either to undergo
Myself the total crime, or to accuse
My other self, the partner of my life;
Whose failing, while her faith to me remains,
I should conceal, and not expose to blame 130
By my complaint; but strict necessity
Subdues me, and calamitous constraint;
Lest on my head both sin and punishment
However insupportable, be all
Devolv'd: though, should I hold my peace, yet thou
Wouldst easily detect what I conceal.—
This Woman, whom thou mad'st to be my help,
And gav'st me as thy perfect gift, so good,
So fit, so acceptable, so divine,
That from her hand I could suspect no ill, 140
And what she did, whatever in itself,
Her doing seem'd to justify the deed;
She gave me of the tree and I did eat.

To whom the Sovran Presence thus replied. 144
 Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey
 Before His voice? or was she made thy guide,
 Superiour, or but equal, that to her
 Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place
 Wherein God set thee above her, made of thee
 And for thee, whose perfection far excell'd 150
 Hers in all real dignity? Adorn'd
 She was indeed, and lovely, to attract
 Thy love, not thy subjection; and her gifts
 Were such as under government well seem'd;
 Unseemly to bear rule; which was thy part
 And person, hadst thou known thyself aright.

So having said, he thus to Eve in few.
 Say, Woman, what is this which thou hast done?

To whom sad Eve, with shame nigh overwhelm'd,
 Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge 160
 Bold or loquacious, thus abash'd replied.
 The Serpent me beguil'd, and I did eat.

Which when the Lord God heard, without delay
 To judgement he proceeded on the accus'd
 Serpent, though brute: unable to transfer
 The guilt on him who made him instrument
 Of mischief, and polluted from the end
 Of his creation; justly, then, accurs'd,
 As vitiated in nature: More to know
 Concern'd not man (since he no farther knew), 170
 Nor alter'd his offence; yet God at last
 To Satan first in sin his doom applied,
 Though in mysterious terms, judg'd as then best:
 And on the Serpent thus his curse let fall.

Because thou hast done this, thou art accurs'd
 Above all cattle, each beast of the field;
 Upon thy belly grovelling thou shalt go,

And dust shalt eat all the days of thy life. 178

Between thee and the woman I will put
Enmity, and between thine and her seed ;
Her seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel

So spake this Oracle, then verified
When Jesus, Son of Mary, second Eve,
Saw Satan fall, like lightning, down from Heaven,
Prince of the air ; then rising from his grave,
Spoil'd Principalities and Powers, triumph'd
In open show ; and, with ascension bright,
Captivity led captive through the air,
The realm itself of Satan, long usurp'd ;
Whom he shall tread at last under our feet, 190
Even he who now foretold his fatal bruise ;
And to the Woman thus his sentence turn'd.

Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply
By thy conception ; children thou shalt bring
In sorrow forth ; and to thy husband's will
Thine shall submit ; he over thee shall rule.

On Adam last thus judgement he pronounc'd.
Because thou hast hearken'd to the voice of thy wife,
And eaten of the tree, concerning which
I charg'd thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat thereof ; 200
Cursed is the ground for thy sake ; thou in sorrow
Shalt eat thereof, all the days of thy life ;
Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth
Unbid ; and thou shalt eat of the herb of the field ;
In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,
Till thou return unto the ground ; for thou
Out of the ground wast taken ; know thy birth,
For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return.

So judg'd he man, both Judge and Saviour sent ;
And the instant stroke of death, denounc'd that day,
Remov'd far off ; then, pitying how they stood

Before him naked to the air, that now 212
 Must suffer change, disdain'd not to begin
 Thenceforth the form of servant to assume ;
 As when he wash'd his servants' feet ;¹ so now,
 As father of his family, he clad
 Their nakedness with skins of beasts, or slain,
 Or as the snake with youthful coat repaid ;
 And thought not much to clothe his enemies :
 Nor he their outward only with the skins 220
 Of beast, but inward nakedness, much more
 Opprobrious, with his robe of righteousness
 Arraying, cover'd from his Father's sight.
 To Him with swift ascent he up return'd,
 Into his blissful bosom reassum'd
 In glory, as of old ; to Him appeas'd
 All, though all-knowing, what had pass'd with Man
 Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.

Meanwhile, ere thus was sinn'd and judg'd on earth,
 Within the gates of Hell sat Sin and Death, 230
 In counterview within the gates, that now
 Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame
 Far into Chaos, since the Fiend pass'd through,
 Sin opening ; who thus now to Death began.

O Son, why sit we here each other viewing
 Idly, while Satan, our great author, thrives
 In other worlds, and happier seat provides
 For us his offspring dear ? It cannot be
 But that success attends him : if mishap,
 Ere this he had return'd, with fury driven 240
 By his avengers ; since no place like this
 Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.
 Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,
 Wings growing, and dominion given me large

¹ 'Wash'd his servants' feet : ' his disciples. See John xiii. 5.

Beyond this deep ; whatever draws me on, 245
Or sympathy, or some connatural force,
Powerful at greatest distance to unite,
With secret amity, things of like kind,
By secretest conveyance. Thou, my shade
Inseparable, must with me along : 250
For Death from Sin no power can separate.
But, lest the difficulty of passing back
Stay his return, perhaps, over this gulph
Impassable, impervious ; let us try
Adventurous work, yet to thy power and mine
Not unagreeable, to found a path
Over this main from Hell to that new world,
Where Satan now prevails ; a monument
Of merit high to all the infernal host,
Easing their passage hence, for intercourse, 260
Or transmigration, as their lot shall lead.
Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn
By this new-felt attraction and instinct.

Whom thus the meagre Shadow answer'd soon.
Go whither Fate and inclination strong
Leads thee : I shall not lag behind, nor err
The way, thou leading ; such a scent I draw
Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste
The savour of death from all things there that live :
Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest 270
Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid.

So saying, with delight he snuff'd the smell
Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock
Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,
Against the day of battle, to a field
Where armies lie encamp'd come flying, lur'd
With scent of living carcasses design'd
For death, the following day, in bloody fight :

So scented the grim Feature, and upturn'd 279
 His nostril wide into the murky air;
 Sagacious of his quarry from so far.
 Then both, from out Hell-gates, into the waste
 Wide anarchy of Chaos, damp and dark,
 Flew diverse; and with power (their power was great)
 Hovering upon the waters, what they met
 Solid or slimy, as in raging sea
 Toss'd up and down, together crowded drove,
 From each side shoaling towards the mouth of Hell,
 As when two polar winds, blowing adverse
 Upon the Cronian sea,¹ together drive 290
 Mountains of ice, that stop the imagin'd way
 Beyond Petsora² eastward, to the rich
 Cathaian coast.³ The aggregated soil
 Death, with his mace petrifick, cold and dry,
 As with a trident, smote, and fix'd as firm
 As Delos,⁴ floating once: the rest his look
 Bound with Gorgonian rigour not to move;
 And with Asphaltic slime, broad as the gate,
 Deep to the roots of hell the gather'd beach
 They fasten'd, and the mole immense wrought on 300
 Over the foaming deep high-arch'd, a bridge
 Of length prodigious, joining to the wall
 Immovable of this now fenceless world,
 Forfeit to Death; from hence a passage broad,
 Smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to Hell.
 So, if great things to small may be compar'd,
 Xerxes, the liberty of Greece to yoke,
 From Susa,⁵ his Memnonian palace high,
 Came to the sea; and, over Hellespont

¹ 'Cronian sea:' the northern frozen sea.—² 'Petsora:' the most north-eastern province of Russia.—³ 'Cathaian coast:' the northern part of China.—⁴ 'Delos:' an island in the Archipelago.—⁵ 'Susa:' called the palace, and Memnonia.

Bridging his way, Europe with Asia join'd, 310
And scourg'd with many a stroke the indignant waves.

Now had they brought the work, by wond'rous art
Pontifical,¹ a ridge of pendent rock,
Over the vex'd abyss, following the track
Of Satan, to the self-same place where he
First lighted from his wing, and landed safe
From out of Chaos, to the outside bare
Of this round World: With pins of adamant
And chains they made all fast, too fast they made
And durable; And now in little space 320
The confines met of empyréan Heaven,
And of this world; and on the left hand, Hell
With long reach interpos'd: three several ways
In sight, to each of these three places led.
And now their way to Earth they had descried,
To Paradise first tending; when, behold!
Satan in likeness of an Angel bright,
Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion² steering
His zenith, while the sun in Aries rose:
Disguis'd he came; but those his children dear 330
Their parent soon discern'd, though in disguise.
He, after Eve seduc'd, unminded slunk
Into the wood fast by; and, changing shape
To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act
By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded
Upon her husband; saw their shame that sought
Vain covertures; but when he saw descend
The Son of God to judge them, terrified
He fled; not hoping to escape, but shun
The present; fearing, guilty, what his wrath

¹ 'Pontifical:' the art of building bridges.—² 'Centaur and Scorpion:' farthest removed from Aries, where the sun then was; and Satan wishing to keep as far as possible from the sun, and Uriel its regent.

Might suddenly inflict; that past return'd 341
By night, and, listening where the hapless pair
Sat in their sad discourse and various plaint,
Thence gather'd his own doom; which understood,
Not instant, but of future time, with joy
And tidings fraught, to Hell he now return'd;
And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot
Of this new wond'rous pontifice, unhop'd
Met, who to meet him came, his offspring dear.
Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight 350
Of that stupendous bridge his joy encreas'd.
Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair
Enchanting daughter, thus the silence broke.

O Parent, these are thy magnifick deeds,
Thy trophies! which thou view'st as not thine own;
Thou art their author and prime architect:
For I no sooner in my heart divin'd,
My heart, which by a secret harmony
Still moves with thine, join'd in connexion sweet,
That thou on earth hadst prosper'd, which thy looks 360
Now also evidence, but straight I felt,
Though distant from thee worlds between, yet felt,
That I must after thee, with this thy son;
Such fatal consequence unites us three!
Hell could no longer hold us in our bounds,
Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure
Detain from following thy illustrious track.
Thou hast achiev'd our liberty, confin'd
Within Hell-gates till now: thou hast impower'd
To fortify thus far, and overlay, 370
With this portentous bridge, the dark abyss.
Thine now is all this world; thy virtue hath won
What thy hands builded not; thy wisdom gain'd
With odds what war hath lost, and full aveng'd

Our foil in Heaven: here thou shalt monarch reign, 375
 There didst not: there let him still victor sway,
 As battle hath adjudg'd; from this new world
 Retiring, by his own doom alienated;
 And henceforth monarchy with thee divide
 Of all things, parted by the empyreal bounds, 380
 His quadrature,¹ from thy orbicular world;
 Or try thee now more dangerous to his throne.

Whom thus the Prince of darkness answer'd glad.
 Fair Daughter, and thou Son and Grandchild both;
 High proof ye now have given to be the race
 Of Satan (for I glory in the name,
 Antagonist of Heaven's Almighty King),
 Amply have merited of me, of all
 The infernal empire, that, so near Heaven's door
 Triumphal with triumphal act have met, 390
 Mine, with this glorious work; and made one realm,
 Hell and this world, one realm, one continent
 Of easy thoroughfare. Therefore, while I
 Descend through darkness, on your road with ease,
 To my associate Powers, them to acquaint
 With these successes, and with them rejoice;
 You two this way, among these numerous orbs,
 All yours, right down to Paradise descend;
 There dwell, and reign in bliss: thence on the earth
 Dominion exercise and in the air, 400
 Chiefly on Man, sole lord of all declar'd;
 Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.
 My substitutes I send ye, and create
 Plenipotent on earth, of matchless might
 Issuing from me; on your joint vigour now
 My hold of this new kingdom all depends,
 Through Sin to Death expos'd by my exploit.

¹ 'Quadrature:' See Rev. xxi. 16, 'The city lieth four-square,' &c.

If your joint power prevail, the affairs of Hell 408
No detriment need fear; go, and be strong!

So saying he dismiss'd them; they with speed
Their course through thickest constellations held,
Spreading their bane; the blasted stars look'd wan,
And planets, planet-struck, real eclipse
Then suffer'd. The other way Satan went down
The causey to Hell-gate: On either side
Disparted Chaos overbuilt exclaim'd,
And with rebounding surge the bars assail'd,
That scorn'd his indignation: Through the gate,
Wide open and unguarded, Satan pass'd
And all about found desolate; for those 420
Appointed to sit there had left their charge,
Flown to the upper world; the rest were all
Far to the inland retir'd, about the walls
Of Pandemonium; city and proud seat
Of Lucifer, so by allusion call'd
Of that bright star to Satan paragon'd;
There kept their watch the legions, while the Grand
In council sat, solicitous what chance
Might intercept their emperour sent; so he
Departing gave command, and they observ'd. 430
As when the Tartar from his Russian foe,
By Astracan, over the snowy plains,
Retires; or Bactrian Sophi,¹ from the horns
Of Turkish crescent, leaves all waste beyond
The realm of Aladule,² in his retreat
To Tauris or Casbeen:³ So these, the late
Heaven-banish'd host, left desert utmost Hell
Many a dark league, reduc'd in careful watch

¹ 'Bactrian Sophi:' Persian emperor.—² 'Aladule:' the Greater Armenia; called so from its last king, Aladules, who was slain in his retreat to Taurus or Ecbatana.—³ 'Casbeen:' another great city of Persia.

Round their metropolis; and now expecting 439
 Each hour their great adventurer from the search
 Of foreign worlds: He through the midst unmark'd,
 In show plebeian Angel militant
 Of lowest order, pass'd; and from the door
 Of that Plutonian hall, invisible
 Ascended his high throne; which under state
 Of richest texture spread, at the upper end
 Was plac'd in regal lustre. Down a while
 He sat, and round about him saw unseen;
 At last, as from a cloud, his fulgent head
 And shape star-bright appear'd, or brighter; clad 450
 With what permissive glory since his fall
 Was left him, or false glitter: All amaz'd
 At that so sudden blaze, the Stygian throng
 Bent their aspect, and whom they wish'd beheld,
 Their mighty chief return'd: loud was the acclaim:
 Forth rush'd in haste the great consulting peers,
 Rais'd from their dark Divan, and with like joy
 Congratulant approach'd him; who with hand
 Silence, and with these words attention, won.

Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers;
 For in possession such, not only of right, 461
 I call ye, and declare ye now; return'd
 Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth
 Triumphant out of this infernal pit
 Abominable, accurs'd, the house of woe,
 And dungeon of our tyrant: Now possess,
 As lords, a spacious world, to our native Heaven
 Little inferiour, by my adventure hard
 With peril great achiev'd. Long were to tell
 What I have done; what suffer'd; with what pain 470
 Voyag'd the unreal, vast, unbounded deep
 Of horrible confusion: over which,

By Sin and Death, a broad way now is pav'd 473
To expedite your glorious march; but I
Toil'd out my uncouth passage, forc'd to ride
The untractable abyss, plung'd in the womb
Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild;
That, jealous of their secrets, fiercely oppos'd
My journey strange, with clamorous uproar
Protesting Fate supreme; thence how I found 480
The new-created world, which fame in Heaven
Long had foretold, a fabrick wonderful
Of absolute perfection! therein man,
Plac'd in a Paradise, by our exile
Made happy: Him by fraud I have seduc'd
From his Creator; and, the more to encrease
Your wonder, with an apple; he, thereat
Offended, worth your laughter! hath given up
Both his beloved Man, and all his world,
To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us, 490
Without our hazard, labour, or alarm;
To range in, and to dwell, and over Man
To rule, as over all he should have rul'd.
True is, me also hath he judg'd, or rather
Me not, but the brute serpent in whose shape
Man I deceiv'd: that which to me belongs,
Is enmity which he will put between
Me and mankind; I am to bruise his heel;
His seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head:
A world who would not purchase with a bruise, 500
Or much more grievous pain?—Ye have the account
Of my performance: What remains, ye gods,
But up, and enter now into full bliss?

So having said, a while he stood, expecting
Their universal shout, and high applause,
To fill his ear; when, contrary, he hears

On all sides, from innumerable tongues, 507
 A dismal universal hiss, the sound
 Of publick scorn; he wonder'd, but not long
 Had leisure, wondering at himself now more;
 His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare;
 His arms clung to his ribs; his legs entwining
 Each other, till supplanted down he fell
 A monstrous serpent, on his belly prone
 Reluctant, but in vain; a greater power
 Now rul'd him, punish'd in the shape he sinn'd.
 According to his doom: he would have spoke,
 But hiss for hiss return'd with forked tongue
 To forked tongue; for now were all transform'd
 Alike, to serpents all, as accessories 520
 To his bold riot: Dreadful was the din
 Of hissing through the hall, thick-swarming now
 With complicated monsters, head and tail,
 Scorpion and Asp, and Amphisbæna dire,
 Cerastes¹ horn'd, Hydrus,² and Elops drear,
 And Dipsas;³ (not so thick swarm'd once the soil
 Bedropp'd with blood of Gorgon, or the isle
 Ophiusa),⁴ but still greatest he the midst,
 Now Dragon grown, larger than whom the sun
 Engender'd in the Pythian vale or slime, 530
 Huge Python,⁵ and his power no less he seem'd
 Above the rest still to retain: they all
 Him follow'd, issuing forth to the open field,
 Where all yet left of that revolted rout,
 Heaven-fallen, in station stood or just array;
 Sublime with expectation when to see

¹ Cerastes: a horned snake.—² Hydrus: the water-snake.—³ Dipsas: called so, because those stung by it were tormented with incurable thirst.—
⁴ Ophiusa: a small island in the Mediterranean, infested with serpents.—
⁵ Python: see *Ovid*.

In triumph issuing forth their glorious Chief ; 537
They saw, but other sight instead! a crowd
Of ugly serpents: horror on them fell,
And horrid sympathy; for, what they saw,
They felt themselves, now changing: down their arms,
Down fell both spear and shield; down they as fast;
And the dire hiss renew'd, and the dire form
Catch'd by contagion; like in punishment,
As in their crime. Thus was the applause they meant
'Turn'd to exploding hiss, triumph to shame
Cast on themselves from their own mouths. There stood
A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change,
His will who reigns above, to aggravate
Their penance, laden with fair fruit, like that 550
Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve
Us'd by the Tempter: on that prospect strange
Their earnest eyes they fix'd, imagining
For one forbidden tree a multitude
Now risen, to work them farther woe or shame;
Yet, parch'd with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,
Though to delude them sent, could not abstain;
But on they roll'd in heaps, and, up the trees
Climbing, sat thicker than the snaky locks
'That curl'd Megæra:¹ greedily they pluck'd 560
The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew
Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flam'd;
This more delusive, not the touch, but taste
Deceiv'd: they, fondly thinking to allay
Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit
Chew'd bitter ashes, which the offended taste
With spattering noise rejected: oft they assay'd,
Hunger and thirst constraining; drugg'd as oft,
With hatefullest disrelish writh'd their jaws,

¹ 'Megæra:' one of the Furies.

With soot and cinders fill'd ; so oft they fell 570
 Into the same illusion, not as Man [plagu'd
 Whom they triumph'd once laps'd. Thus were they
 And worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,
 Till their lost shape, permitted, they resum'd ;
 Yearly enjoin'd, some say, to undergo
 This annual humbling certain number'd days,
 To dash their pride and joy for Man seduc'd.
 However, some tradition they dispers'd
 Among the heathen, of their purchase got,
 And fabled how the Serpent, whom they call'd 580
 Ophion,¹ with Eurynome, the wide-
 Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first the rule
 Of high Olympus ; thence by Saturn driven
 And Ops, ere yet Dictæan Jove was born.

Meanwhile in Paradise the hellish pair
 Too soon arriv'd ; Sin, there in power before,
 Once actual ; now in body, and to dwell
 Habitual habitant ; behind her Death,
 Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet
 On his pale horse : To whom Sin thus began. 590

Second of Satan sprung, all-conquering Death !
 What think'st thou of our empire now, though earn'd
 With travel difficult, not better far
 Than still at Hell's dark threshold to have sat watch,
 Unnam'd, undreaded, and thyself half-starv'd ?

Whom thus the Sin-born monster answer'd soon.
 To me, who with eternal famine pine,
 Alike is Hell, or Paradise, or Heaven ;
 There best, where most with ravine I may meet ;
 Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems 600
 To stuff this maw, this vast unhide-bound corps.

¹ ' Ophion and Eurynome ' were said to have inhabited Olympus, till expelled by Saturn and Ops. Milton sees in this story a tradition of the fall.

To whom the incestuous mother thus replied. 602
Thou, therefore, on these herbs, and fruits, and flowers,
Feed first; on each beast next, and fish, and fowl;
No homely morsels! and whatever thing
The sithe of Time mows down, devour unspar'd;
Till I, in Man residing, through the race,
His thoughts, his looks, words, actions, all infect;
And season him thy last and sweetest prey.

This said, they both betook them several ways, 610
Both to destroy, or unimmortal make
All kinds, and for destruction to mature
Sooner or later; which the Almighty seeing,
From his transcendent seat the Saints among,
To those bright Orders utter'd thus his voice.

See, with what heat these dogs of Hell advance
To waste and havoc yonder world, which I
So fair and good created; and had still
Kept in that state, had not the folly of Man
Let in these wasteful furies, who impute 620
Folly to me: so doth the prince of Hell
And his adherents, that with so much ease
I suffer them to enter and possess
A place so heavenly; and, conniving, seem
To gratify my scornful enemies,
That laugh, as if, transported with some fit
Of passion, I to them had quitted all,
At random yielded up to their misrule;
And know not that I call'd, and drew them thither,
My Hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth 630
Which Man's polluting sin with taint hath shed
On what was pure; till, cramm'd and gorg'd, nigh burst
With suck'd and glutted offal, at one sling
Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,
Both Sin and Death, and yawning Grave, at last

Through Chaos hurl'd, obstruct the mouth of Hell 636
 For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.
 Then Heaven and Earth renew'd shall be made pure
 To sanctity, that shall receive no stain:
 Till then, the curse pronounced on both proceeds.

He ended, and the heavenly Audience loud
 Sung Halleluiah, as the sound of seas,
 Through multitude that sung: Just are Thy ways,
 Righteous are Thy decrees on all Thy works;
 Who can extenuate Thee? Next, to the Son,
 Destin'd Restorer of mankind, by whom
 New Heaven and Earth shall to the ages rise,
 Or down from Heaven descend.—Such was their song;
 While the Creator, calling forth by name
 His mighty Angels, gave them several charge, 650
 As sorted best with present things. The sun
 Had first his precept so to move, so shine,
 As might affect the earth with cold and heat
 Scarce tolerable; and from the north to call
 Decrepit winter; from the south to bring
 Solstitial summer's heat. To the blanc¹ moon
 Her office they prescrib'd; to the other five
 Their planetary motions and aspects,
 In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite,²
 Of noxious efficacy, and when to join 660
 In synod unbenign; and taught the fix'd
 Their influence malignant when to shower,
 Which of them, rising with the sun, or falling,
 Should prove tempestuous: To the winds they set
 Their corners, when with bluster to confound
 Sea, air, and shore; the thunder when to roll
 With terrour through the dark æreal hall.
 Some say he bid his Angels turn ascance

¹ 'Blanc:' French for white.—² 'Sextile, square,' &c. : astrological jargon.

The poles of earth, twice ten degrees and more, 699
 From the sun's axle; they with labour push'd
 Oblique the centrick globe: Some say, the sun
 Was bid turn reins from the equinoctial road
 Like-distant breadth to Taurus with the seven
 Atlantic Sisters,¹ and the Spartan Twins,
 Up to the tropick Crab; thence down amain
 By Leo, and the Virgin, and the Scales,
 As deep as Capricorn; to bring in change
 Of seasons to each clime: else had the spring
 Perpetual smil'd on earth with vernant flowers,
 Equal in days and nights, except to those 680
 Beyond the polar circles; to them day
 Had unbenighted shone, while the low sun,
 To recompense his distance, in their sight
 Had rounded still the horizon, and not known
 Or east or west; which had forbid the snow
 From cold Estotiland,² and south as far
 Beneath Magellan.³ At that tasted fruit
 The sun, as from Thyéstean banquet⁴ turn'd
 His course intended; else how had the world
 Inhabited, though sinless, more than now, 690
 Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat?
 These changes in the Heavens, though slow, produc'd
 Like change on sea and land: sideral blast,
 Vapour, and mist, and exhalation hot,
 Corrupt and pestilent: Now from the north
 Of Norumbega,⁵ and the Samoed shore,⁶
 Bursting their brazen dungeon, arm'd with ice,

¹ 'The seven Atlantic Sisters:' the Pleiades on the neck of the Bull.—

² 'Estotiland:' a large tract of country in North America.—³ 'Magellan:' a district in South America.—⁴ 'Thyéstean banquet:' the banquet Atreus gave to his brother Thyestes of his own children, at which the sun was said to turn away.—⁵ 'Norumbega:' a province in North America.—⁶ Samoed shore:' a province in Russia.

And snow, and hail, and stormy gust and flaw, 698
 Boreas,¹ and Cæcias, and Argestes loud,
 And Thrascias, rend the woods, and seas upturn;
 With adverse blast upturns them from the south
 Notus, and Afer black with thunderous clouds
 From Serrationa; thwart of these, as fierce
 Forth rush the Levant, and the Ponent winds,
 Eurus and Zephyr, with their lateral noise,
 Sirocco and Libecchio. Thus began
 Outrage from lifeless things; but Discord first,
 Daughter of Sin, among the irrational
 Death introduced, through fierce antipathy:
 Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl, 710
 And fish with fish; to graze the herb all leaving,
 Devour'd each other; nor stood much in awe
 Of Man, but fled him; or, with count'nance grim,
 Glar'd on him passing. These were from without
 The growing miseries, which Adam saw
 Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,
 To sorrow abandon'd, but worse felt within;
 And, in a troubled sea of passion toss'd,
 Thus to disburden sought with sad complaint.

O miserable of happy! Is this the end 720
 Of this new glorious world, and me so late
 The glory of that glory, who now become
 Accurs'd of blessed? hide me from the face
 Of God, whom to behold was then my highth
 Of happiness! Yet well, if here would end
 The misery; I deserv'd it, and would bear
 My own deservings; but this will not serve:
 All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,
 Is propagated curse. O voice, once heard

¹ 'Boreas,' &c. : a strange jumble of Latin and Italian names for varied winds.

Delightfully, *Encrease and multiply* ; 730
Now death to hear ! for what can I encrease,
Or multiply, but curses on my head ?
Who of all ages to succeed, but, feeling
The evil on him brought by me, will curse
My head ? Ill fare our ancestor impure,
For this we may thank Adam ! but his thanks
Shall be the execration : so, besides
Mine own that bide upon me, all from me
Shall with a fierce reflux on me rebound ;
On me, as on their natural center, light 740
Heavy, though in their place. O fleeting joys
Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woes !
Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay
To mould me Man ? Did I solicit thee
From darkness to promote me, or here place
In this delicious garden ? As my will
Concurr'd not to my being, it were but right
And equal to reduce me to my dust ;
Desirous to resign and render back
All I receiv'd ; unable to perform 750
Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
'The good I sought not. To the loss of that,
Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added
The sense of endless woes ? Inexplicable
Thy justice seems ; yet, to say truth, too late
I thus contest : then should have been refus'd
Those terms, whatever, when they were propos'd :
Thou didst accept them : wilt thou enjoy the good,
Then cavil the conditions ? and, though God
Made thee without thy leave, what if thy son 760
Prove disobedient ; and, reprov'd, retort,
" Wherefore didst thou beget me ? I sought it not :"
Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee

That proud excuse ? yet him not thy election, 764
But natural necessity, begot.
God made thee of choice his own, and of his own
To serve him ; thy reward was of his grace ;
Thy punishment, then, justly is at his will.
Be it so, for I submit ; his doom is fair,
That dust I am and shall to dust return : 770
O welcome hour whenever ! Why delays
His hand to execute what his decree
Fix'd on this day ? Why do I overlive ?
Why am I mock'd with death, and lengthen'd out
To deathless pain ? How gladly would I meet
Mortality, my sentence, and be earth
Insensible ! How glad would lay me down,
As in my mother's lap ! There I should rest,
And sleep secure ; his dreadful voice no more
Would thunder in my ears ; no fear of worse 780
To me, and to my offspring, would torment me
With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt
Pursues me still, lest all I cannot die ;
Lest that pure breath of life, the spirit of Man
Which God inspir'd, cannot together perish
With this corporeal clod : then, in the grave,
Or in some other dismal place, who knows
But I shall die a living death ? O thought
Horrid, if true ! Yet why ? It was but breath
Of life that sinn'd : what dies, but what had life 790
And sin ? The body properly had neither.
All of me, then, shall die ; let this appease
The doubt, since human reach no farther knows.
For though the Lord of all be infinite,
Is his wrath also ? Be it ; Man is not so,
But mortal doom'd. How can he exercise
Wrath without end on Man whom death must end ?

Can he make deathless death? That were to make 798
Strange contradiction, which to God himself
Impossible is held; as argument
Of weakness, not of power. Will he draw out,
For anger's sake, finite to infinite,
In punish'd man, to satisfy his rigour,
Satisfied never? That were to extend
His sentence beyond dust and Nature's law;
By which all causes else, according still
To the reception of their matter, act;
Not to the extent of their own sphere. But say
That death be not one stroke, as I suppos'd,
Bereaving sense, but endless misery 810
From this day onward; which I feel begun
Both in me and without me; and so last
To perpetuity;—Ay me! that fear
Comes thundering back with dreadful revolution
On my defenceless head: both Death and I
Are found eternal, and incorporate both;
Nor I on my part single; in me all
Posterity stands curs'd: Fair patrimony
That I must leave ye, Sons! O were I able
To waste it all myself, and leave ye none! 820
So disinherited, how would you bless
Me, now your curse! Ah! why should all mankind,
For one man's fault, thus guiltless be condemn'd,
If guiltless? But from me what can proceed,
But all corrupt; both mind and will deprav'd,
Not to do only, but to will the same
With me? How can they, then, acquitted stand
In sight of God? Him, after all disputes,
Forc'd I absolve; all my evasions vain,
And reasonings, though through mazes, lead me still 830
But to my own conviction: first and last

On me, me only, as the source and spring 832
 Of all corruption, all the blame lights due ;
 So might the wrath ! Fond wish ! couldst thou support
 That burden, heavier than the earth to bear ;
 Than all the world much heavier, though divided
 With that bad Woman ? Thus, what thou desir'st,
 And what thou fear'st, alike destroys all hope
 Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable
 Beyond all past example and future ; 840
 To Satan only like both crime and doom.
 O Conscience ! into what abyss of fears
 And horrors hast thou driven me ! out of which
 I find no way, from deep to deeper plung'd !

Thus Adam to himself lamented loud
 Through the still night ; not now, as ere Man fell,
 Wholesome, and cool, and mild, but with black air
 Accompanied, with damps, and dreadful gloom ;
 Which to his evil conscience represented
 All things with double terrour : On the ground 850
 Outstretch'd he lay, on the cold ground ; and oft
 Curs'd his creation ; Death as oft accus'd
 Of tardy execution, since denounc'd
 The day of his offence. Why comes not Death,
 Said he, with one thrice acceptable stroke
 To end me ? Shall Truth fail to keep her word,
 Justice Divine not hasten to be just ?
 But Death comes not at call ; Justice Divine
 Mends not her slowest pace for prayers or cries.
 O woods, O fountains, hillocks, dales, and bowers ! 860
 With other echo late I taught your shades
 To answer, and resound far other song.—

Whom, thus afflicted, when sad Eve beheld,
 Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,

Soft words to his fierce passion she assay'd ; 865
But her with stern regard he thus repell'd.

Out of my sight, thou Serpent ! That name best
Befits thee with him leagu'd, thyself as false
And hateful ; nothing wants, but that thy shape,
Like his, and colour serpentine, may show 870
Thy inward fraud ; to warn all creatures from thee
Henceforth ; lest that too heavenly form, pretended¹
To hellish falsehood, snare them ! But for thee
I had persisted happy ; had not thy pride
And wandering vanity, when least was safe,
Rejected my forewarning, and disdain'd
Not to be trusted, longing to be seen,
Though by the Devil himself ; him overweening
To overreach ; but, with the Serpent meeting,
Fool'd and beguil'd : by him thou, I by thee, 880
To trust thee from my side ; imagin'd wise,
Constant, mature, proof against all assaults ;
And understood not all was but a show,
Rather than solid virtue ; all but a rib
Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears,
More to the part sinister, from me drawn ;
Well if thrown out, as supernumerary
To my just number found. O why did God,
Creator wise, that peopled highest Heaven
With Spirits masculine, create at last 890
This novelty on earth, this fair defect
Of nature, and not fill the world at once
With Men, as Angels, without feminine ;
Or find some other way to generate
Mankind ? This mischief had not then befallen,
And more that shall befall ; innumerable
Disturbances on earth through female snares,

¹ ' Pretended : ' i. e., placed before hellish, &c.

And strait conjunction with this sex ; for either 898
 He never shall find out fit mate, but such
 As some misfortune brings him, or mistake ;
 Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain
 Through her perverseness, but shall see her gain'd
 By a far worse ; or, if she love, withheld
 By parents ; or his happiest choice too late
 Shall meet, already link'd and wedlock-bound
 To a fell adversary, his hate or shame :
 Which infinite calamity shall cause
 To human life, and household peace confound.

He added not, and from her turn'd ; but Eve,
 Not so repuls'd, with tears that ceas'd not flowing, 910
 And tresses all disorder'd, at his feet
 Fell humble ; and, embracing them, besought
 His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint.

Forsake me not thus, Adam ! witness Heaven
 What love sincere and reverence in my heart
 I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,
 Unhappily deceiv'd ! Thy suppliant
 I beg, and clasp thy knees ; bereave me not,
 Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,
 Thy counsel, in this uttermost distress, 920
 My only strength and stay : Forlorn of thee,
 Whither shall I betake me, where subsist ?
 While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,
 Between us two let there be peace ; both joining,
 As join'd in injuries, one enmity
 Against a foe by doom express assign'd us,
 That cruel Serpent : On me exercise not
 Thy hatred for this misery befallen ;
 On me already lost, me than thyself
 More miserable ! Both have sinn'd ; but thou 930
 Against God only : I against God and thee ;

And to the place of judgement will return, 932
There with my cries impórtune Heaven ; that all
The sentence, from thy head remov'd, may light
On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe ;
Me, me only, just object of his ire !

She ended weeping ; and her lowly plight,
Immovable, till peace obtain'd from fault
Acknowledged and deplor'd, in Adam wrought
Commiseration : Soon his heart relented 940
Towards her, his life so late, and sole delight,
Now at his feet submissive in distress ;
Creature so fair his reconcilement seeking,
His counsel, whom she had displeas'd, his aid.
As one disarm'd, his anger all he lost,
And thus with peaceful words uprais'd her soon.

Unwary, and too desirous, as before,
So now of what thou know'st not, who desir'st
The punishment all on thyself ; alas !
Bear thine own first, ill able to sustain 950
His full wrath, whose thou feel'st as yet least part,
And my displeasure bear'st so ill. If prayers
Could alter high decrees, I to that place
Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,
That on my head all might be visited ;
Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiven,
To me committed, and by me expos'd.
But rise ;—let us no more contend, nor blame
Each other, blam'd enough elsewhere ; but strive
In offices of love, how we may lighten 960
Each other's burden, in our share of woe ;
Since this day's death denounc'd, if aught I see,
Will prove no sudden, but a slow-pac'd evil ;
A long day's dying, to augment our pain ;
And to our seed (O hapless seed !) deriv'd.

To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, replied. 966
Adam, by sad experiment I know
How little weight my words with thee can find,
Found so erroneous ; thence by just event
Found so unfortunate : Nevertheless,
Restor'd by thee, vile as I am, to place
Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain
Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart
Living or dying, from thee I will not hide
What thoughts in my unquiet breast are risen,
Tending to some relief of our extremes,
Or end ; though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,
As in our evils, and of easier choice.
If care of our descent perplex us most,
Which must be born to certain woe, devour'd 980
By Death at last ; and miserable it is
To be to others cause of misery,
Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring
Into this cursed world a woful race,
That after wretched life must be at last
Food for so foul a monster ; in thy power
It lies, yet, ere conception, to prevent
The race unblest, to being yet unbegot.
Childless thou art, childless remain : so Death
Shall be deceiv'd his glut, and with us two 990
Be forc'd to satisfy his ravenous maw.
But if thou judge it hard and difficult,
Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain
From love's due rites, nuptial embraces sweet ;
And with desire to languish without hope,
Before the present object languishing
With like desire ; which would be misery
And torment less than none of what we dread ;
Then, both ourselves and seed at once to free

From what we fear for both, let us make short,— 1000
Let us seek Death ;—or, he not found, supply
With our own hands his office on ourselves :
Why stand we longer shivering under fears
That show no end but death, and have the power,
Of many ways to die the shortest choosing,
Destruction with destruction to destroy ?—

She ended here, or vehement despair
Broke off the rest ; so much of death her thoughts
Had entertain'd, as dy'd her cheeks with pale.
But Adam, with such counsel nothing sway'd, 1010
To better hopes his more attentive mind
Labouring had rais'd ; and thus to Eve replied.

Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems
To argue in thee something more sublime
And excellent, than what thy mind contemns ;
But self-destruction therefore sought, refutes
That excellent thought in thee ; and implies,
Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret
For loss of life and pleasure overlov'd,
Or if thou covet death, as utmost end 1020
Of misery, so thinking to evade
The penalty pronounc'd, doubt not but God
Hath wiselier arm'd his vengeful ire, than so
To be forestall'd ; much more I fear lest death,
So snatch'd, will not exempt us from the pain
We are by doom to pay ; rather, such acts
Of contumacy will provoke the Highest
To make death in us live : Then let us seek
Some safer resolution, which, methinks,
I have in view, calling to mind with heed 1030
Part of our sentence, that thy Seed shall bruise
The Serpent's head ; piteous amends ! unless
Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe,

Satan ; who, in the serpent, hath contriv'd 1034
Against us this deceit : To crush his head
Would be revenge indeed ! which will be lost
By death brought on ourselves, or childless days
Resolv'd, as thou proposest ; so our foe
Shall 'scape his punishment ordain'd, and we
Instead shall double ours upon our heads. 1040
No more be mention'd, then, of violence
Against ourselves ; and wilful barrenness,
That cuts us off from hope ; and savours only
Rancour and pride, impatience and despite,
Reluctance against God and his just yoke
Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild
And gracious temper He both heard and judg'd,
Without wrath or reviling : we expected
Immediate dissolution, which we thought
Was meant by death that day ; when lo ! to thee 1050
Pains only in childbearing were foretold,
And bringing forth ; soon recompens'd with joy,
Fruit of thy womb : On me the curse aslope
Glanc'd on the ground ; with labour I must earn
My bread ; what harm ? Idleness had been worse ;
My labour will sustain me ; and, lest cold
Or heat should injure us, His timely care
Hath, unbesought, provided ; and His hands
Cloth'd us unworthy, pitying while He judg'd ;
How much more, if we pray Him, will His ear 1060
Be open, and His heart to pity incline,
And teach us farther by what means to shun
The inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail, and snow !
Which now the sky, with various face, begins
To show us in this mountain ; while the winds
Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks
Of these fair-spreading trees ; which bids us seek

Some better shroud, some better warmth to cherish 1068
 Our limbs benumm'd, ere this diurnal star
 Leave cold the night, how we his gather'd beams
 Reflected may with matter sere foment ;
 Or, by collision of two bodies, grind
 The air attrite to fire ; as late the clouds
 Justling, or push'd with winds, rude in their shock,
 Tine¹ the slant lightning ; whose thwart flame, driven down
 Kindles the gummy bark of fir or pine,
 And sends a comfortable heat from far,
 Which might supply the sun : Such fire to use,
 And what may else be remedy or cure
 To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought, 1080
 He will instruct us praying, and of grace
 Beseeching Him ; so as we need not fear
 To pass commodiously this life, sustain'd
 By Him with many comforts, till we end
 In dust, our final rest and native home.
 What better can we do, than, to the place
 Repairing where He judg'd us, prostrate fall
 Before Him reverent ; and there confess
 Humbly our faults, and pardon beg ; with tears
 Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air 1090
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
 Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek ?
 Undoubtedly He will relent, and turn
 From His displeasure ; in whose look serene,
 When angry most He seem'd and most severe,
 What else but favour, grace, and mercy, shone ?
 So spake our father penitent : nor Eve
 Felt less remorse : they forthwith to the place
 Repairing, where He judg'd them, prostrate fell

¹ 'Tine : ' kindle.

Before Him reverent ; and both confess'd 1100
Humbly their faults, and pardon begg'd ; with tears
Watering the ground, and with their sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek.

BOOK XI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Son of God presents to his Father the prayers of our first parents now repenting, and intercedes for them: God accepts them, but declares that they must no longer abide in Paradise; sends Michael with a band of cherubim to dispossess them; but first to reveal to Adam future things: Michael's coming down. Adam shows to Eve certain ominous signs; he discerns Michael's approach; goes out to meet him: the angel denounces their departure. Eve's lamentation. Adam pleads, but submits; the angel leads him up to a high hill; sets before him in vision what shall happen till the Flood.

THUS they, in lowliest plight, repentant stood
Praying; for, from the mercy-seat above,
Prevenient grace descending had remov'd
The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh
Regenerate grow instead; that sighs now breath'd
Unutterable, which the Spirit of prayer
Inspir'd, and wing'd for Heaven with speedier flight
Than loudest oratory: Yet their port
Not of mean suitors; nor important less
Seem'd their petition, than when the ancient pair 10
In fables old, less ancient yet than these,
Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha, to restore
The race of mankind drown'd, before the shrine
Of Themis¹ stood devout. To Heaven their prayers
Flew up, nor miss'd the way, by envious winds
Blown vagabond or frustrate: in they pass'd
Dimensionless through heavenly doors; then, clad
With incense, where the golden altar fum'd
By their great Intercessour, came in sight

¹ 'Themis:' the goddess of justice.

Before the Father's throne : them the glad Son 20
Presenting, thus to intercede began.

See, Father, what first-fruits on earth are sprung
From thy implanted grace in Man ; these sighs
And prayers, which in this golden censer, mix'd
With incense, I thy priest before thee bring ;
Fruits of more pleasing savour, from thy seed
Sown with contrition in his heart, than those
Which, his own hand manuring, all the trees
Of Paradise could have produc'd, ere fallen
From innocence. Now, therefore, bend thine ear 30
To supplication ; hear his sighs, though mute ;
Unskilful with what words to pray, let me
Interpret for him ; me, his advocate
And propitiation ; all his works on me,
Good, or not good, ingraft ; my merit those
Shall perfect, and for these my death shall pay.
Accept me ; and, in me, from these receive
The smell of peace toward mankind : let him live
Before thee reconcil'd, at least his days
Number'd, though sad ; till death, his doom (which I 40
To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse),
To better life shall yield him : where, with me,
All my redeem'd may dwell in joy, and bliss ;
Made one with me, as I with thee am one.

To whom the Father, without cloud, serene.
All thy request for Man, accepted Son,
Obtain ; all thy request was my decree :
But, longer in that Paradise to dwell,
The law I gave to Nature him forbids :
Those pure immortal elements that know 50
No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,
Eject him, tainted now ; and purge him off,
As a distemper, gross, to air as gross,

And mortal food ; as may dispose him best 54
For dissolution wrought by sin, that first
Distemper'd all things, and of incorrupt
Corrupted. I, at first, with two fair gifts
Created him, endow'd ; with happiness
And immortality : that fondly lost,
This other serv'd but to eternize woe ; 60
Till I provided death : so death becomes
His final remedy ; and, after life,
Tried in sharp tribulation, and refin'd
By faith and faithful works, to second life,
Wak'd in the renovation of the just,
Resigns him up with Heaven and Earth renew'd.
But let us call to synod all the Blest
Through Heaven's wide bounds : from them I will not hide
My judgements ; how with mankind I proceed,
As how with peccant Angels late they saw, 70
And in their state, though firm, stood more confirm'd.

He ended, and the Son gave signal high
To the bright minister that watch'd : he blew
His trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps
When God descended, and perhaps once more
To sound at general doom. The angelick blast
Fill'd all the regions : from their blissful bowers
Of amarantine shade, fountain or spring,
By the waters of life, where'er they sat
In fellowships of joy, the sons of light 80
Hasted, resorting to the summons high ;
And took their seats ; till, from his throne supreme,
The Almighty thus pronounc'd his sovran will.

O sons, like one of us Man is become,
To know both good and evil, since his taste
Of that defended fruit ; but let him boast
His knowledge of good lost, and evil got ;

Happier, had it suffic'd him to have known 89
 Good by itself, and evil not at all.

He sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite,
 My motions in him ; longer than they move,
 His heart I know, how variable and vain,
 Self-left. Lest, therefore, his now bolder hand
 Reach also of the tree of life, and eat,
 And live for ever, dream at least to live
 For ever, to remove him I decree,
 And send him from the garden forth to till
 The ground whence he was taken, fitter soil.

Michael, this my behest have thou in charge ; 100
 Take to thee from among the Cherubim
 Thy choice of flaming warriors, lest the Fiend,
 Or in behalf of Man, or to invade
 Vacant possession, some new trouble raise :
 Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God,
 Without remorse, drive out the sinful pair ;
 From hallow'd ground the unholy ; and denounce
 To them, and to their progeny, from thence
 Perpetual banishment. Yet, lest they faint
 At the sad sentence rigorously urg'd,
 (For I behold them soften'd, and with tears 110
 Bewailing their excess), all terrour hide.

If patiently thy bidding they obey,
 Dismiss them not disconsolate ; reveal
 To Adam what shall come in future days,
 As I shall thee enlighten ; intermix
 My covenant in the Woman's seed renew'd ;
 So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace :
 And on the east side of the garden place,
 Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,
 Cherubick watch ; and of a sword the flame 120
 Wide waving ; all approach far off to fright,

And guard all passage to the tree of life : 122
 Lest Paradise a réceptacle prove
 To Spirits foul, and all my trees their prey ;
 With whose stolen fruit Man once more to delude.

He ceas'd ; and the Arch-angelick power prepar'd
 For swift descent ; with him the cohort bright
 Of watchful Cherubim : four faces each
 Had, like a double Janus ;¹ all their shape
 Spangled with eyes more numerous than those 130
 Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drowse,
 Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the pastoral reed
 Of Hermes, or his opiate rod.² Meanwhile,
 To re-salute the world with sacred light,
 Leucothea³ wak'd, and with fresh dew's imbalm'd
 The earth ; when Adam and first matron Eve
 Had ended now their orisons, and found
 Strength added from above ; new hope to spring
 Out of despair ; joy, but with fear yet link'd ;
 Which thus to Eve his welcome words renew'd. 140

Eve, easily may faith admit that all
 The good which we enjoy from Heaven descends ;
 But, that from us aught should ascend to Heaven,
 So prevalent as to concern the mind
 Of God High blest, or to incline His will,
 Hard to belief may seem ; yet this will prayer,
 Or one short sigh of human breath, upborne
 Even to the seat of God. For since I sought
 By prayer the offended Deity to appease ;
 Kneel'd, and before him humbled all my heart ; 150
 Methought I saw him placable and mild,
 Bending His ear ; persuasion in me grew

¹ 'Janus:' a king, afterwards a god in Italy, represented with two faces.—

² 'Opiate rod:' a wand of Mercury, able to give sleep to whomsoever he pleased.—³ 'Leucothea:' the goddess of morning.

That I was heard with favour ; peace return'd 153
 Home to my breast, and to my memory
 His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our foe ;
 Which, then not minded in dismay, yet now
 Assures me that the bitterness of death
 Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee,
 Eve rightly call'd, mother of all mankind,
 Mother of all things living, since by thee 160
 Man is to live ; and all things live for Man.

To whom thus Eve, with sad demeanour meek.
 Ill worthy I such title should belong
 To me transgressour ; who, for thee ordain'd
 A help, became thy snare : to me reproach
 Rather belongs, distrust, and all dispraise :
 But infinite in pardon was my Judge,
 That I, who first brought death on all, am grac'd
 The source of life : next favourable thou,
 Who highly thus to entitle me vouchsaf'st, 170
 Far other name deserving. But the field
 To labour calls us now with sweat impos'd,
 Though after sleepless night ; for see ! the Morn,
 All unconcern'd with our unrest, begins
 Her rosy progress smiling : let us forth ;
 I never from thy side henceforth to stray,
 Where'er our day's work lies, though now enjoin'd
 Laborious till day droop : while here we dwell,
 What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks ?
 Here let us live, though in fallen state, content. 180

So spake, so wish'd much humbled Eve ; but Fate
 Subscrib'd not : Nature first gave signs, impress'd
 On bird, beast, air ; air suddenly eclips'd,
 After short blush of morn ; nigh in her sight
 The bird of Jove stoop'd from his aery tour,
 Two birds of gayest plume before him drove ;

Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,¹ 187
 First hunter then, pursu'd a gentle brace,
 Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind ;
 Direct to the eastern gate was bent their flight.
 Adam observ'd, and with his eye the chase
 Pursuing, not unmov'd, to Eve thus spake.

O Eve, some farther change awaits us nigh,
 Which Heaven, by these mute signs in Nature, shows
 Forerunners of his purpose ; or to warn
 Us, haply too secure of our discharge
 From penalty, because from death releas'd
 Some days : how long, and what till then our life,
 Who knows ? or more than this, that we are dust,
 And thither must return, and be no more ? 200
 Why else this double object in our sight
 Of flight pursu'd in the air, and o'er the ground,
 One way the self-same hour ? why in the east
 Darkness ere day's mid-course, and morning light
 More orient in yon western cloud, that draws
 O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,
 And slow descends with something heavenly fraught ?

He err'd not ; for by this the heavenly bands
 Down from a sky of jasper lighted now
 In Paradise, and on a hill made halt ; 210
 A glorious apparition, had not doubt
 And carnal fear that day dimm'd Adam's eye.
 Not that more glorious, when the angels met
 Jacob in Mahanaim,² where he saw
 The field pavilion'd with his guardians bright ;
 Nor that, which on the flaming mount appear'd
 In Dothan, cover'd with a camp of fire,
 Against the Syrian king, who, to surprise

¹ 'Beast that reigns in woods,' i. e., a lion.—² 'Mahanaim : ' see Genesis xxxii. 1, &c.—³ 'Dothan : ' see 2 Kings vi. 13.

One man, assassin-like, had levied war, 219
 War unproclaim'd. The princely Hierarch
 In their bright stand there left his Powers, to seize
 Possession of the garden : he alone
 To find where Adam shelter'd, took his way ;
 Not unperceiv'd of Adam, who to Eve,
 While the great visitant approach'd, thus spake.

Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps
 Of us will soon determine, or impose
 New laws to be observ'd ; for I descry
 From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill,
 One of the heavenly host, and, by his gait, 230
 None of the meanest ; some great Potentate,
 Or of the Thrones above ; such majesty
 Invests him coming ! yet not terrible,
 That I should fear ; nor sociably mild,
 As Raphaël, that I should much confide ;
 But solemn and sublime ; whom, not to offend,
 With reverence I must meet, and thou retire.

He ended : and the Arch-Angel soon drew nigh,
 Not in his shape celestial, but as man
 Clad to meet man ; over his lucid arms 240
 A military vest of purple flow'd,
 Livelier than Melibœan,¹ or the grain
 Of Sarra,² worn by kings and heroes old
 In time of truce ; Iris³ had dipt the woof ;
 His starry helm unbuckled show'd him prime
 In manhood where youth ended : by his side,
 As in a glistering zodiack, hung the sword,
 Satan's dire dread ; and in his hand the spear.
 Adam bow'd low : he, kingly, from his state
 Inclined not, but his coming thus declar'd.

¹ ' Melibœan : ' from a city in Thessaly, famous for purple.—² ' Grain of Sarra : ' from the name of a Tyrian fish which bleeds purple.—³ ' Iris : ' the rainbow.

Adam, Heaven's high behest no preface needs : 251
 Sufficient that thy prayers are heard ; and Death,
 Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,
 Defeated of his seizure many days
 Given thee of grace ; wherein thou may'st repent,
 And one bad act with many deeds well done
 May'st cover : Well may then thy Lord, appeas'd,
 Redeem thee quite from Death's rapacious claim ;
 But longer in this Paradise to dwell
 Permits not : to remove thee I am come, 260
 And send thee from the garden forth to till
 The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil.

He added not ; for Adam at the news
 Heart-struck with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,
 That all his senses bound : Eve, who unseen
 Yet all had heard, with audible lament
 Discover'd soon the place of her retire.

O unexpected stroke, worse than of Death !
 Must I thus leave thee, Paradise ? thus leave
 Thee, native soil ! these happy walks and shades, 270
 Fit haunt of gods ? where I had hope to spend
 Quiet, though sad, the respite of that day
 That must be mortal to us both. O flowers,
 That never will in other climate grow,
 My early visitation, and my last
 At even, which I bred up with tender hand
 From the first opening bud, and gave ye names !
 Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank
 Your tribes, and water from the ambrosial fount ?
 Thee lastly, nuptial bower, by me adorn'd 280
 With what to sight or smell was sweet ! from thee
 How shall I part, and whither wander down
 Into a lower world ; to this obscure

And wild ? how shall we breathe in other air 284
Less pure, accustom'd to immortal fruits ?

Whom thus the Angel interrupted mild.
Lament not, Eve, but patiently resign
What justly thou hast lost, nor set thy heart,
Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine :
Thy going is not lonely ; with thee goes 290
Thy husband ; him to follow thou art bound ;
Where he abides, think there thy native soil.

Adam, by this from the cold sudden damp
Recovering, and his scatter'd spirits return'd,
To Michael thus his humble words address'd.

Celestial, whether among the Thrones, or nam'd
Of them the highest ; for such of shape may seem
Prince above princes ! gently hast thou told
Thy message, which might else in telling wound,
And in performing end us ; what besides 300
Of sorrow, and dejection, and despair,
Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring,
Departure from this happy place, our sweet
Recess, and only consolation left
Familiar to our eyes ! All places else
Inhospitable appear, and desolate ;
Nor knowing us, nor known : And, if by prayer
Incessant I could hope to change the will
Of Him who all things can, I would not cease
To weary Him with my assiduous cries : 310
But prayer against His absolute decree
No more avails than breath against the wind,
Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth :
Therefore to His great bidding I submit.
This most afflicts me, that departing hence
As from His face, I shall be hid, depriv'd
His blessed countenance : Here I could frequent

With worship place by place where He vouchsaf'd 318
Presence Divine ; and to my sons relate,
“ On this mount He appear'd ; under this tree
Stood visible, among these pines His voice
I heard ; here with Him at this fountain talk'd : ”
So many grateful altars I would rear
Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone
Of lustre from the brook, in memory,
Or monument to ages ; and thereon
Offer sweet-smelling gums, and fruits, and flowers :
In yonder nether world where shall I seek
His bright appearances, or footstep trace ?
For though I fled Him angry, yet recall'd 330
To life prolong'd and promis'd race, I now
Gladly behold though but His utmost skirts
Of glory ; and far off His steps adore.

To whom thus Michael with regard benign.
Adam, thou know'st Heaven His, and all the Earth ;
Not this rock only ; His Omnipresence fills
Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,
Fomented by his virtual power and warm'd :
All the earth He gave thee to possess and rule,
No despicable gift ; surmise not, then, 340
His presence to these narrow bounds confin'd
Of Paradise, or Eden : this had been
Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread
All generations ; and had hither come
From all the ends of the earth, to celebrate
And reverence thee, their great progenitor.
But this pre-eminence thou hast lost, brought down
To dwell on even ground now with thy sons :
Yet doubt not but in valley, and in plain,
God is, as here ; and will be found alike 350
Present ; and of His presence many a sign

Still following thee, still compassing thee round 352
With goodness and paternal love, His face
Express, and of His steps the track divine.
Which that thou may'st believe, and be confirm'd
Ere thou from hence depart, know, I am sent
To show thee what shall come in future days
To thee, and to thy offspring : good with bad
Expect to hear ; supernal grace contending
With sinfulness of men ; thereby to learn 360
True patience, and to temper joy with fear
And pious sorrow ; equally inur'd
By moderation either state to bear,
Prosperous or adverse : so shalt thou lead
Safest thy life, and best prepar'd endure
Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend
This hill ; let Eve (for I have drench'd her eyes)
Here sleep below, while thou to foresight wak'st ;
As once thou slept'st, while she to life was form'd.

To whom thus Adam gratefully replied. 370
Ascend, I follow thee, safe Guide, the path
Thou lead'st me ; and to the hand of Heaven submit,
However chastening ; to the evil turn
My obvious breast ; arming to overcome
By suffering, and earn rest from labour won,
If so I may attain. So both ascend,
In the visions of God. It was a hill,
Of Paradise the highest ; from whose top
The hemisphere of earth, in clearest ken,
Stretch'd out to the amplest reach of prospect lay. 380
Not higher that hill, nor wider looking round,
Whereon, for different cause, the Tempter set
Our second Adam, in the wilderness ;
To show him all Earth's kingdoms, and their glory.
His eye might there command wherever stood

City of old or modern fame, the seat 386
 Of mightiest empire, from the destin'd wall
 Of Cambalu,¹ seat of Cathaian Can,
 And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's² throne.
 To Paquin³ of Sinæan⁴ kings ; and thence
 To Agra and Lahor of Great Mogul,
 Down to the golden Chersonese ;⁵ or where
 The Persian in Ecbatan sat, or since
 In Hispahan ; or where the Russian Kzar
 In Mosco ; or the Sultan in Bizance,⁶
 Turchestan-born ;⁷ nor could his eye not ken
 The empire of Negus⁸ to his utmost port
 Ercoco,⁹ and the less maritim kings
 Mombaza,¹⁰ and Quiloa, and Melind,
 And Sofala, thought Ophir, to the realm 400
 Of Congo, and Angola farthest south ;
 Or thence, from Niger flood to Atlas mount,
 The kingdoms of Almansor,¹¹ Fez, and Sus,
 Morocco, and Algiers, and Tremisen ;
 On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway
 The world : in spirit perhaps he also saw
 Rich Mexico, the seat of Montezume,¹²
 And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat
 Of Atabalipa ;¹³ and yet unspoil'd
 Guiana,¹⁴ whose great city Geryon's sons¹⁵ 410
 Call El Dorado. But to nobler sights
 Michael from Adam's eyes the film remov'd,

¹ 'Cambalu : ' the principal city of Cathay.—² 'Temir : ' Tamerlane.—
³ 'Paquin : ' *i. e.*, Pekin.—⁴ 'Sinæan : ' Chinese.—⁵ 'Chersonese,' *i. e.*,
 Malacca.—⁶ 'Bizance : ' Byzantium, now Constantinople.—⁷ 'Turchestan : ' a
 province of Tartary.—⁸ 'Negus : ' king of Upper Ethiopia.—⁹ 'Ercoco : '
 Erquico, on the Red Sea.—¹⁰ 'Mombaza,' &c. : all in Africa.—¹¹ 'Almansor,'
 &c. : kingdoms in Barbary.—¹² 'Montezume : ' an Indian chief subdued by
 Cortez.—¹³ 'Atabalipa : ' the last Indian emperor subdued by Pizarro.—
¹⁴ 'Guiana : ' in South America.—¹⁵ 'Geryon's sons : ' Spaniards, from the
 name of an ancient king of Spain.

Which that false fruit, that promis'd clearer sight, 413
 Had bred ; then purg'd with euphrasy and rue
 The visual nerve, for he had much to see ;
 And from the well of life three drops instill'd.
 So deep the power of these ingredients pierc'd,
 Even to the inmost seat of mental sight,
 That Adam now enforc'd to close his eyes,
 Sunk down, and all his spirits became entranc'd ; 420
 But him the gentle Angel by the hand
 Soon rais'd, and his attention thus recall'd.

Adam, now ope thine eyes ; and first behold
 The effects which thy original crime hath wrought
 In some to spring from thee ; who never touch'd
 The excepted tree, nor with the snake conspir'd,
 Nor sinn'd thy sin ; yet from that sin derive
 Corruption, to bring forth more violent deeds.

His eyes he open'd, and beheld a field,
 Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves 430
 New-reap'd ; the other part sheep-walks and folds ;
 I' the midst an altar as the land-mark stood,
 Rustick, of grassy sord ;¹ thither anon
 A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought
 First-fruits, the green ear, and the yellow sheaf,
 Uncull'd, as came to hand ; a shepherd next,
 More meek, came with the firstlings of his flock,
 Choicest and best ; then, sacrificing, laid
 The inwards and their fat, with incense strew'd,
 On the cleft wood, and all due rites perform'd : 440
 His offering soon propitious fire from Heaven
 Consum'd with nimble glance, and grateful steam ;
 The other's not, for his was not sincere ;
 Whereat he inly rag'd, and as they talk'd,
 Smote him into the midriff with a stone

¹ 'Sord : ' sward.

That beat out life ; he fell ; and, deadly pale, 446
Groan'd out his soul with gushing blood effus'd.
Much at that sight was Adam in his heart
Dismay'd, and thus in haste to the Angel cried.

O teacher, some great mischief hath befallen
To that meek man, who well had sacrific'd ;
Is piety thus and pure devotion paid ?

To whom Michael thus, he also mov'd, replied.
These two are brethren, Adam, and to come
Out of thy loins : the unjust the just hath slain,
For envy that his brother's offering found
From Heaven acceptance ; but the bloody fact
Will be aveng'd ; and the other's faith approv'd,
Lose no reward ; though here thou see him die,
Rolling in dust and gore. To which our sire : 460

Alas ! both for the deed and for the cause !
But have I now seen Death ? Is this the way
I must return to native dust ? O sight
Of terror, foul and ugly to behold,
Horrid to think, how horrible to feel !

To whom thus Michaël. Death thou hast seen
In his first shape on Man ; but many shapes
Of death, and many are the ways that lead
To his grim cave, all dismal : yet to sense
More terrible at the entrance, than within. 470
Some, as thou saw'st, by violent stroke shall die ;
By fire, flood, famine ; by intemperance more
In meats and drinks, which on the earth shall bring
Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew
Before thee shall appear ; that thou may'st know
What misery the inabstinence of Eve
Shall bring on men. Immediately a place
Before his eyes appear'd, sad, noisome, dark ;
A lazar-house it seem'd ; wherein were laid

Numbers of all diseases'd ; all maladies 480
 Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
 Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,
 Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
 Intestine stone, and ulcer, colick pangs,
 Demoniac phrensy, moping melancholy,
 And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,
 Marasmus,¹ and wide-wasting pestilence,
 Dropsies and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.
 Dire was the tossing, deep the groans ; Despair
 Tended the sick busiest from couch to couch ; 490
 And over them triumphant Death his dart
 Shook, but delay'd to strike, though oft invoc'd
 With vows, as their chief good, and final hope.
 Sight so deform what heart of rock could long
 Dry-eyed behold ? Adam could not, but wept,
 Though not of woman born ; compassion quell'd
 His best of man, and gave him up to tears
 A space, till firmer thoughts restrain'd excess ;
 And scarce recovering words his plaint renew'd.

O miserable mankind, to what fall 500
 Degraded, to what wretched state reserv'd !
 Better end here unborn. Why is life given
 To be thus wrested from us ? rather, why
 Obtruded on us thus ? who, if we knew
 What we receive, would either not accept
 Life offer'd, or soon beg to lay it down ;
 Glad to be so dismiss'd in peace. Can thus
 The image of God in Man, created once
 So goodly and erect, though faulty since,
 To such unsightly sufferings be debas'd 510
 Under inhuman pains ? Why should not Man,
 Retaining still divine similitude

¹ ' Marasmus : ' a slow feverish consumption.

In part, from such deformities be free, 513
And, for his Maker's image sake, exempt ?

Their Maker's image, answer'd Michael, then
Forsook them, when themselves they vilified
To serve ungovern'd Appetite ; and took
His image whom they serv'd, a brutish vice,
Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve.

Therefore so abject is their punishment, 520
Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own ;
Or if His likeness, by themselves defac'd ;
While they pervert pure Nature's healthful rules
To loathsome sickness ; worthily, since they
God's image did not reverence in themselves.

I yield it just, said Adam, and submit.
But is there yet no other way, besides
These painful passages, how we may come
To death, and mix with our connatural dust ?

There is, said Michael, if thou well observe 530
The rule of *Not too much* ; by temperance taught,
In what thou eat'st and drink'st ; seeking from thence
Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,
Till many years over thy head return :
So may'st thou live ; till, like ripe fruit, thou drop
Into thy mother's lap ; or be with ease
Gather'd, not harshly pluck'd, for death mature :
This is Old Age ; but then, thou must outlive
Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will change
To wither'd, weak, and gray ; thy senses then, 540
Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forego,
To what thou hast ; and, for the air of youth,
Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign
A melancholy damp of cold and dry
To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume
The balm of life. To whom our ancestor.

Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong 547
 Life much : bent rather, how I may be quit,
 Fairest and easiest, of this cumbrous charge ;
 Which I must keep till my appointed day
 Of rendering up, and patiently attend
 My dissolution. Michaël replied.

Nor love thy life, nor hate ; but, what thou liv'st
 Live well ; how long or short permit to Heaven :
 And now prepare thee for another sight.

He look'd, and saw a spacious plain, whereon
 Were tents of various hues ; by some were herds
 Of cattle grazing ; others, whence the sound
 Of instruments, that made melodious chime,
 Was heard, of harp and organ ; and, who mov'd¹ 560
 Their stops and chords, was seen ; his volant touch,
 Instinct through all proportions, low and high,
 Fled and pursu'd transverse the resonant fugue.²
 In other part stood one who, at the forge³
 Labouring, two massy clods of iron and brass
 Had melted (whether found where casual fire
 Had wasted woods on mountain or in vale,
 Down to the veins of earth ; thence gliding hot
 To some cave's mouth ; or whether wash'd by stream
 From underground ;) the liquid ore he drain'd 570
 Into fit moulds prepar'd ; from which he form'd
 First his own tools ; then what might else be wrought
 Fusil or graven in metal. After these,
 But on the hither side, a different sort
 From the high neighbouring hills, which was their seat,
 Down to the plain descended ; by their guise
 Just men they seem'd, and all their study bent
 To worship God aright, and know his works

¹ ' Who mov'd : ' Tubal.—² ' Fugue : ' a term in music, expressing the correspondency of the parts.—³ ' One who, at the forge : ' Tubal-Cain.

Not hid ; nor those things last, which might preserve
Freedom and peace to men ; they on the plain 580
Long had not walk'd, when, from the tents, behold !
A bevy of fair women, richly gay
In gems and wanton dress ; to the harp they sung
Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on :
The men, though grave, ey'd them ; and let their eyes
Rove without rein ; till, in the amorous net
Fast caught, they lik'd ; and each his liking chose ;
And now of love they treat, till the evening star,
Love's harbinger, appear'd ; then, all in heat,
They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke 590
Hymen, then first to marriage rites invok'd :
With feast and music all the tents resound.
Such happy interview, and fair event
Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands, flowers,
And charming symphonies, attach'd the heart
Of Adam, soon inclin'd to admit delight,
The bent of Nature ; which he thus express'd.

True opener of mine eyes, prime Angel blest
Much better seems this vision, and more hope
Of peaceful days portends, than those two past ; 600
Those were of hate and death, or pain much worse ;
Here Nature seems fulfill'd in all her ends.

To whom thus Michael. Judge not what is best
By pleasure, though to Nature seeming meet ;
Created, as thou art, to nobler end
Holy and pure, conformity divine.
Those tents thou saw'st so pleasant, were the tents
Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race
Who slew his brother ; studious they appear
Of arts that polish life, inventers rare ; 610
Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit
Taught them ; but they his gifts acknowledg'd none.

Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget ; 613
 For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seem'd
 Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,
 Yet empty of all good wherein consists
 Woman's domestick honour and chief praise ;
 Bred only and completed to the taste
 Of lustful appetence, to sing, to dance,
 To dress, and troll¹ the tongue, and roll the eye : 620
 To these that sober race of men, whose lives
 Religious titled them the sons of God,
 Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame
 Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles
 Of these fair atheists ; and now swim in joy,
 Erelong to swim at large ; and laugh, for which
 The world erelong a world of tears must weep.

To whom thus Adam, of short joy bereft.
 O pity and shame, that they, who to live well
 Enter'd so fair, should turn aside to tread
 Paths indirect, or in the midway faint !
 But still I see the tenor of Man's woe
 Holds on the same, from Woman to begin.

From Man's effeminate slackness it begins,
 Said the Angel, who should better hold his place
 By wisdom, and superiour gifts receiv'd.
 But now prepare thee for another scene.

He look'd, and saw wide territory spread
 Before him, towns, and rural works between ;
 Cities of men with lofty gates and towers, 640
 Concourse in arms, fierce faces threatening war,
 Giants of mighty bone and bold emprise ;
 Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed,
 Single or in array of battle rang'd
 Both horse and foot, nor idly mustering stood ;

¹ 'Troll : ' to use the tongue volubly and affectedly.

One way a band select from forage drives 646
A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine,
From a fat meadow-ground ; or fleecy flock,
Ewes and their bleating lambs over the plain,
Their booty ; scarce with life the shepherds fly,
But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray ;
With cruel tournament the squadrons join ;
Where cattle pastur'd late, now scatter'd lies
With carcasses and arms the ensanguin'd field,
Deserted. Others to a city strong
Lay siege, encamp'd ; by battery, scale, and mine,
Assaulting : others from the wall defend,
With dart and javelin, stones, and sulph'rous fire ;
On each hand slaughter and gigantic deeds.
In other parts the scepter'd heralds call 660
To council, in the city-gates ; anon
Gray-headed men and grave, with warriors mix'd,
Assemble, and harangues are heard ; but soon,
In factious opposition ; till at last,
Of middle age one rising,¹ eminent
In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,
Of justice, of religion, truth, and peace,
And judgement from above : him old and young
Exploded, and had seiz'd with violent hands,
Had not a cloud descending snatch'd him thence, 670
Unseen amid the throng : so violence
Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law,
Through all the plain, and refuge none was found.
Adam was all in tears, and to his guide
Lamenting turn'd full sad ; O what are these,
Death's ministers, not men ? who thus deal death
Inhumanly to men, and multiply
Ten thousandfold the sin of him who slew

¹ ' One rising : ' Enoch, namely.

His brother : for of whom such massacre 679
Make they, but of their brethren ; men of men ?
But who was that just man, whom had not Heaven
Rescu'd, had in his righteousness been lost ?

To whom thus Michael. These are the product
Of those ill-mated marriages thou saw'st ;
Where good with bad were match'd, who of themselves
Abhor to join ; and, by imprudence mix'd,
Produce prodigious births of body or mind.
Such were these giants, men of high renown ;
For in those days might only shall be admir'd,
And valour and heroick virtue call'd ; 690
To overcome in battle, and subdue
Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite
Manslaughter, shall be held the highest pitch
Of human glory ; and for glory done
Of triumph, to be styl'd great conquerours,
Patrons of mankind, gods, and sons of gods ;
Destroyers rightlier call'd, and plagues of men.
Thus fame shall be achiev'd, renown on earth ;
And what most merits fame, in silence hid.
But he, the seventh from thee, whom thou beheld'st 700
The only righteous in a world perverse,
And therefore hated, therefore so beset
With foes, for daring single to be just,
And utter odious truth, that God would come
To judge them with his Saints : him the Most High,
Wrapt in a balmy cloud with winged steeds,
Did, as thou saw'st, receive, to walk with God
High in salvation and the climes of bliss,
Exempt from death ; to show thee what reward
Awaits the good ; the rest what punishment ; 710
Which now direct thine eyes and soon behold.

He look'd, and saw the face of things quite chang'd ;

The brazen throat of war had ceas'd to roar ; 713
All now was turn'd to jollity and game,
To luxury and riot, feast and dance :
Marrying or prostituting, as befell,
Rape or adultery, where passing fair
Allur'd them ; thence from cups to civil broils.
At length a reverend sire¹ among them came,
And of their doings great dislike declar'd, 720
And testified against their ways : he oft
Frequented their assemblies, whereso met,
Triumphs or festivals ; and to them preach'd
Conversion and repentance, as to souls
In prison, under judgements imminent :
But all in vain : which, when he saw, he ceas'd
Contending, and remov'd his tents far off ;
Then, from the mountain hewing timber tall,
Began to build a vessel of huge bulk ;
Measur'd by cubit, length, and breadth, and highth :
Smear'd round with pitch ; and in the side a door 731
Contriv'd ; and of provisions laid in large,
For man and beast : when, lo, a wonder strange !
Of every beast, and bird, and insect small,
Came sevens and pairs ; and enter'd in as taught
Their order : last the sire and his three sons,
With their four wives ; and God made fast the door.
Meanwhile the south wind rose, and with black wings
Wide hovering, all the clouds together drove
From under Heaven : the hills to their supply 740
Vapour, and exhalation, dusk and moist,
Sent up amain ; and now the thicken'd sky
Like a dark cieling stood : down rush'd the rain
Impetuous ; and continued, till the earth
No more was seen : the floating vessel swum

¹ ' Reverend sire : ' Noah.

Uplifted, and secure with beaked prow 746
Rode tilting o'er the waves ; all dwellings else
Flood overwhelm'd, and them with all their pomp
Deep under water roll'd : sea cover'd sea,
Sea without shore : and in their palaces,
Where luxury late reign'd, sea-monsters whelp'd
And stabled ; of mankind, so numerous late,
All left, in one small bottom swum imbark'd.
How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold
The end of all thy offspring, end so sad,
Depopulation ! Thee another flood,
Of tears and sorrow a flood, thee also drown'd,
And sunk thee as thy sons ; till gently rear'd
By the Angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last,
Though comfortless ; as when a father mourns 760
His children, all in view destroy'd at once ;
And scarce to the Angel utter'dst thus thy plaint.

O visions ill foreseen ! Better had I
Liv'd ignorant of future ! so had borne
My part of evil only, each day's lot
Enough to bear : those now, that were dispens'd
The burden of many ages, on me light
At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth
Abortive, to torment me ere their being,
With thought that they must be. Let no man seek
Henceforth to be foretold what shall befall 771
Him or his children ; evil he may be sure,
Which neither his foreknowing can prevent ;
And he the future evil shall no less
In apprehension than in substance feel,
Grievous to bear : but that care now is past,
Man is not whom to warn : those few escap'd
Famine and anguish will at last consume,
Wandering that watery desart. I had hope

When violence was ceas'd and war on earth, 780
 All would have then gone well ; peace would have crown'd
 With length of happy days the race of Man ;
 But I was far deceiv'd ; for now I see
 Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.
 How comes it thus ? unfold, celestial guide,
 And whether here the race of Man will end.

To whom thus Michael. Those whom last thou saw'st
 In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they
 First seen in acts of prowess eminent
 And great exploits, but of true virtue void ; 790
 Who, having spilt much blood, and done much waste,
 Subduing nations, and achiev'd thereby
 Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey ;
 Shall change their course to pleasure, ease, and sloth,
 Surfeit, and lust ; till wantonness and pride
 Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.
 The conquer'd also, and enslav'd by war,
 Shall, with their freedom lost, all virtue lose
 And fear of God ; from whom their piety feign'd
 In sharp contest of battle found no aid 800
 Against invaders ; therefore, cool'd in zeal,
 Thenceforth shall practise how to live secure,
 Worldly or dissolute, on what their lords
 Shall leave them to enjoy ; for the Earth shall bear
 More than enough, that temperance may be tried :
 So all shall turn degenerate, all deprav'd ;
 Justice and temperance, truth and faith, forgot ;
 One man¹ except, the only son of light
 In a dark age, against example good,
 Against allurement, custom, and a world 810
 Offended : fearless of reproach and scorn,

¹ 'One man : ' Noah literally, but the passage faithfully describes Milton himself.

Or violence, he of their wicked ways 812
 Shall them admonish ; and before them set
 The paths of righteousness, how much more safe
 And full of peace ; denouncing wrath to come
 On their impenitence ; and shall return
 Of them derided, but of God observ'd
 The one just man alive ; by his command
 Shall build a wonderous ark, as thou beheld'st,
 To save himself and household from amidst 820
 A world devote to universal wrack.
 No sooner he, with them of man and beast
 Select for life, shall in the ark be lodg'd
 And shelter'd round ; but all the cataracts
 Of Heaven set open on the Earth, shall pour
 Rain, day and night ; all fountains of the deep,
 Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp
 Beyond all bounds ; till inundation rise
 Above the highest hills : Then shall this mount
 Of Paradise by might of waves be mov'd 830
 Out of his place, push'd by the horned flood,
 With all his verdure spoil'd, and trees adrift,
 Down the great river to the opening gulf,
 And there take root an island salt and bare,
 The haunt of seals, and orcs,¹ and sea-mews' clang :
 To teach thee that God áttributes to place
 No sanctity, if none be thither brought
 By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.
 And now, what farther shall ensue, behold.

He look'd, and saw the ark hull on the flood, 840
 Which now abated ; for the clouds were fled,
 Driven by a keen north wind, that, blowing dry,
 Wrinkled² the face of deluge, as decay'd ;

¹ 'Orcs : ' a kind of whale.—² 'Wrinkled : ' this reminds us of Byron's famous line in his Address to the Ocean, "Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow."

And the clear sun on his wide watery glass 844
 Gaz'd hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew,
 As after thirst ; which made their flowing shrink
 From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole
 With soft foot towards the deep ; who now had stopt
 His sluices, as the Heaven his windows shut.
 The ark no more now floats, but seems on ground, 850
 Fast on the top of some high mountain fix'd.
 And now the tops of hills, as rocks, appear ;
 With clamour thence the rapid currents drive,
 Towards the retreating sea, their furious tide.
 Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies,
 And after him, the surer messenger,
 A dove sent forth once and again to spy
 Green tree or ground, whereon his foot may light :
 The second time returning, in his bill
 An olive-leaf he brings, pacifick sign : 860
 Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark
 The ancient sire descends with all his train ;
 Then, with uplifted hands, and eyes devout,
 Grateful to Heaven, over his head beholds
 A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow
 Conspicuous with three listed colours¹ gay,
 Betokening peace from God, and covenant new.
 Whereat the heart of Adam, erst so sad,
 Greatly rejoic'd ; and thus his joy broke forth.

O thou, who future things canst represent 870
 As present, heavenly Instructor ! I revive
 At this last sight, assur'd that Man shall live,
 With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.
 Far less I now lament for one whole world
 Of wicked sons destroy'd, than I rejoice
 For one man found so perfect, and so just,

¹ ' Three colours : ' *i. e.*, azure, green, and red.

That God vouchsafes to raise another world 877
From him, and all his anger to forget.
But say, what mean those colour'd streaks in heaven,
Distended, as the brow of God appeas'd?
Or serve they, as a flowery verge, to bind
The fluid skirts of that same watery cloud,
Lest it again dissolve, and shower the earth?

To whom the Arch-Angel. Dexterously thou aim'st ;
So willingly doth God remit his ire,
Though late repenting Him of Man deprav'd ;
Griev'd at His heart, when looking down He saw
The whole earth fill'd with violence, and all flesh
Corrupting each their way ; yet, those remov'd,
Such grace shall one just man find in His sight, 890
That He relents, not to blot out mankind ;
And makes a covenant never to destroy
The earth again by flood ; nor let the sea
Surpass his bounds : nor rain to drown the world,
With man therein or beast ; but when He brings
Over the earth a cloud, will therein set
His triple-colour'd bow, whereon to look,
And call to mind His covenant : Day and night,
Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost,
Shall hold their course ; till fire purge all things new,
Both Heaven and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell.

BOOK XII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The angel Michael continues, from the Flood, to relate what shall succeed: then, in the mention of Abraham, comes by degrees to explain who that seed of the woman shall be, which was promised Adam and Eve in the fall; his incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension: the state of the Church till his second coming. Adam, greatly satisfied and recomfited by these relations and promises, descends the hill with Michael; wakens Eve, who all this while had slept, but with gentle dreams composed to quietness of mind and submission. Michael in either hand leads them out of Paradise, the fiery sword waving behind them, and the cherubim taking their stations to guard the place.

As one who in his journey bates at noon,
Though bent on speed; so here the Arch-Angel paus'd,
Betwixt the world destroy'd and world restor'd,
If Adam aught perhaps might interpose:
Then, with transition sweet, new speech resumes.

Thus thou hast seen one world begin and end;
And Man, as from a second stock, proceed.
Much thou hast yet to see; but I perceive
Thy mortal sight to fail; objects divine
Must needs impair and weary human sense: 10
Henceforth what is to come I will relate;
Thou therefore give due audience, and attend.

This second source of men, while yet but few,
And while the dread of judgement past remains
Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity,
With some regard to what is just and right
Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace;
Labouring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,
Corn, wine, and oil; and, from the herd or flock
Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid, 20
With large wine-offerings pour'd, and sacred feast,

Shall spend their days in joy unblam'd; and dwell 22
Long time in peace, by families and tribes,
Under paternal rule: till one¹ shall rise
Of proud ambitious heart, who, not content
With fair equality, fraternal state,
Will arrogate dominion undeserv'd
Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
Concord and love of nature from the earth;
Hunting (and men not beasts shall be his game) 30
With war and hostile snare such as refuse
Subjection to his empire tyrannous:
A mighty hunter thence he shall be styl'd
Before the Lord; as in despite of Heaven,
Or from Heaven, claiming second sovranity;
And from rebellion shall derive his name,
Though of rebellion others he accuse.
He with a crew, whom like ambition joins
With him or under him to tyrannize,
Marching from Eden towards the west, shall find 40
The plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge
Boils out from underground, the mouth of Hell:
Of brick, and of that stuff, they cast to build
A city and tower whose top may reach to Heaven;
And get themselves a name; lest, far dispers'd
In foreign lands, their memory be lost;
Regardless whether good or evil fame.
But God, who oft descends to visit men
Unseen, and through their habitations walks
To mark their doings, them beholding soon, 50
Comes down to see their city, ere the tower
Obstruct Heaven-towers; and in derision sets
Upon their tongues a various spirit,² to rase

¹ 'One:' Nimrod.—² 'Various spirit:' a spirit varying and confusing the sounds by which they would express their thoughts.

Quite out their native language; and, instead, 54
To sow a jangling noise of words unknown:
Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud
Among the builders; each to other calls
Not understood; till hoarse, and all in rage,
As mock'd they storm: great laughter was in Heaven,
And looking down, to see the hubbub strange, 60
And hear the din: Thus was the building left
Ridiculous, and the work *Confusion* nam'd.

Whereto thus Adam, fatherly displeas'd.
O execrable son! so to aspire
Above his brethren; to himself assuming
Authority usurp'd, from God not given:
He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,
Dominion absolute; that right we hold
By his donation; but Man over men
He made not lord; such title to Himself 70
Reserving, human left from human free.
But this usurper his encroachment proud
Stays not on Man; to God his tower intends
Siege and defiance: Wretched man! what food
Will he convey up thither, to sustain
Himself and his rash army; where thin air
Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross,
And famish him of breath, if not of bread?

To whom thus Michael. Justly thou abhorr'st
That son, who on the quiet state of men 80
Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
Rational liberty; yet know withal,
Since thy original lapse, true liberty
Is lost, which always with right reason dwells
Twinn'd, and from her hath no dividual being:
Reason in man obscur'd, or not obey'd,
Immediately inordinate desires,

And upstart passions, catch the government 88
 From reason; and to servitude reduce
 Man, till then free. Therefore, since he permits
 Within himself unworthy powers to reign
 Over free reason, God, in judgement just,
 Subjects him from without to violent lords;
 Who oft as undeservedly enthrall
 His outward freedom: Tyranny must be;
 Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.
 Yet sometimes nations will decline so low
 From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong,
 But justice, and some fatal curse annex'd,
 Deprives them of their outward liberty; 100
 Their inward lost: Witness the irreverent son
 Of him who built the ark; who for the shame
 Done to his father, heard this heavy curse,
Servant of servants, on his vicious race.

Thus will this latter, as the former world,
 Still tend from bad to worse; till God at last,
 Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw
 His presence from among them, and avert
 His holy eyes; resolving from thenceforth
 To leave them to their own polluted ways; 110
 And one peculiar nation to select
 From all the rest, of whom to be invoc'd,
 A nation from one faithful man¹ to spring:
 Him, on this side Euphrates yet residing,
 Bred up in idol-worship: O that men,
 (Canst thou believe?) should be so stupid grown,
 While yet the patriarch lived who 'scaped the flood,
 As to forsake the living God, and fall
 To worship their own work in wood and stone
 For gods! Yet him God the Most High vouchsafes

¹ 'One faithful man:' Abraham.

To call by vision, from his father's house, 121
 His kindred, and false gods, into a land
 Which He will show him; and from him will raise
 A mighty nation; and upon him shower
 His benediction so, that in his seed
 All nations shall be blest: he straight obeys;
 Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes:
 I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith
 He leaves his gods, his friends, and native soil,
 Ur of Chaldæa, passing now the ford 130
 To Haran; after him a cumbrous train
 Of herds, and flocks, and num'rous servitude;
 Not wandering poor, but trusting all his wealth
 With God, who call'd him, in a land unknown.
 Canaan he now attains; I see his tents
 Pitch'd about Sechem,¹ and the neighbouring plain
 Of Moreh; there, by promise, he receives
 Gift to his progeny of all that land,
 From Hamath northward to the Desart south;
 (Things by their names I call, though yet unnam'd);
 From Hermon east to the great western sea: 141
 Mount Hermon, yonder sea; each place behold
 In prospect, as I point them; on the shore
 Mount Carmel; here, the double-founted stream,
 Jordan, true limit eastward; but his sons
 Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of hills.
 This ponder, that all nations of the earth
 Shall in his seed be blessed: By that seed
 Is meant thy Great Deliverer, who shall bruise
 The Serpent's head; whereof to thee anon 150
 Plainlier shall be reveal'd. This patriarch bless'd,
 Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,
 A son, and of his son a grandchild, leaves;

¹ 'Sechem,' &c. : see Genesis.

Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown. 154
The grandchild, with twelve sons encreas'd, departs
From Canaan to a land hereafter call'd
Egypt, divided by the river Nile;
See where it flows, disgorging at seven mouths
Into the sea: To sojourn in that land
He comes, invited by a younger son 160
In time of dearth; a son, whose worthy deeds
Raise him to be the second in that realm
Of Pharaoh: There he dies, and leaves his race
Growing into a nation, and now grown
Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks
To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests
Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves
Inhospitably, and kills their infant males;
Till by two brethren (these two brethren call
Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claim 170
His people from enthrallment, they return,
With glory and spoil, back to their promis'd land.
But first the lawless tyrant, who denies
To know their God, or message to regard,
Must be compell'd by signs and judgements dire;
To blood unshed the rivers must be turn'd;
Frogs, lice, and flies, must all his palace fill
With loath'd intrusion, and fill all the land;
His cattle must of rot and murren die;
Botches and blains must all his flesh emboss, 180
And all his people; thunder mix'd with hail,
Hail mix'd with fire, must rend the Egyptian sky,
And wheel on the earth, devouring where it rolls;
What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,
A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down
Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green;
Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,

Palpable darkness, and blot out three days; 188
Last, with one midnight stroke, all the first-born
Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds
The river-dragon tam'd, at length submits
To let his sojourners depart, and oft
Humbles his stubborn heart; but still, as ice
More harden'd after thaw; till, in his rage,
Pursuing whom he late dismiss'd, the sea
Swallows him with his host; but them lets pass,
As on dry land, between two crystal walls;
Aw'd by the rod of Moses so to stand
Divided, till his rescu'd gain their shore:
Such wondrous power God to his saint will lend, 200
Though present in his Angel; who shall go
Before them in a cloud, and pillar of fire;
By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire;
To guide them in their journey, and remove
Behind them, while the obdurate king pursues:
All night he will pursue; but his approach
Darkness defends between till morning watch;
Then through the fiery pillar and the cloud
God looking forth will trouble all his host,
And craze their chariot-wheels: when, by command,
Moses once more his potent rod extends 211
Over the sea, the sea his rod obeys;
On their embattled ranks the waves return,
And overwhelm their war: The race elect
Safe towards Canaan from the shore advance
Through the wild Desart, not the readiest way;
Lest, entering on the Canaanite alarm'd,
War terrify them inexpert, and fear
Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather
Inglorious life with servitude; for life 220
To noble and ignoble is more sweet

Untrain'd in arms, where rashness leads not on. 222
This also shall they gain by their delay
In the wide wilderness; there they shall found
Their government, and their great senate choose
Through the twelve tribes, to rule by laws ordain'd:
God from the mount of Sinai, whose gray top
Shall tremble, He descending, will Himself
In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpets' sound,
Ordain them laws; part, such as appertain 230
To civil justice; part, religious rites
Of sacrifice; informing them, by types
And shadows, of that destin'd Seed to bruise
The Serpent, by what means He shall achieve
Mankind's deliverance. But the voice of God
To mortal ear is dreadful: They beseech
That Moses might report to them His will,
And terrour cease: He grants what they besought,
Instructed that to God is no access
Without Mediator, whose high office now 240
Moses in figure bears; to introduce
One greater, of whose day he shall foretel,
And all the Prophets in their age the times
Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus laws and rites
Establish'd, such delight hath God in men
Obedient to His will, that He vouchsafes
Among them to set up His tabernacle;
The Holy One with mortal men to dwell:
By his prescript a sanctuary is fram'd
Of cedar, overlaid with gold; therein 250
An ark, and in the ark His testimony,
The records of His covenant; over these
A mercy-seat of gold, between the wings
Of two bright Cherubim: before Him burn
Seven lamps, as in a zodiack representing

The heavenly fires;¹ over the tent a cloud 256
 Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night;
 Save when they journey: and at length they come,
 Conducted by His Angel, to the land
 Promis'd to Abraham and his seed: The rest
 Were long to tell; how many battles fought;
 How many kings destroy'd, and kingdoms won;
 Or how the sun shall in mid Heaven stand still
 A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,
 Man's voice commanding, "Sun, in Gibeon stand,
 And thou, moon, in the vale of Aialon,
 Till Israel overcome!" so call the third
 From Abraham, son of Isaac; and from him
 His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win.

Here Adam interpos'd. O, sent from heaven, 270
 Enlightener of my darkness! gracious things
 Thou hast reveal'd; those chiefly which concern
 Just Abraham and his seed; now first I find
 Mine eyes true-opening, and my heart much eas'd,
 Erewhile perplex'd with thoughts, what would become
 Of me and all mankind: But now I see
 His day in whom all nations shall be blest;
 Favour unmerited by me, who sought
 Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.
 This yet I apprehend not, why to those 280
 Among whom God will deign to dwell on earth
 So many and so various laws are given;
 So many laws argue so many sins
 Among them; how can God with such reside?

To whom thus Michael. Doubt not but that sin
 Will reign among them, as of thee begot;
 And therefore was law given them, to evince
 Their natural pravity, by stirring up

¹ 'The heavenly fires:' the seven planets only then known.

Sin against law to fight; that when they see 289
Law can discover sin, but not remove,
Save by those shadowy expiations weak,
The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude
Some blood more precious must be paid for Man;
Just for unjust; that, in such righteousness
To them by faith imputed, they may find
Justification towards God, and peace
Of conscience; which the law by ceremonies
Cannot appease; nor Man the moral part
Perform, and not performing, cannot live.
So law appears imperfect, and but given 300
With purpose to resign them, in full time,
Up to a better covenant; disciplin'd
From shadowy types to truth; from flesh to spirit;
From imposition of strict laws to free
Acceptance of large grace; from servile fear
To filial; works of law to works of faith.
And therefore shall not Moses, though of God
Highly belov'd, being but the minister
Of law, his people into Canaan lead;
But Joshua, whom the Gentiles Jesus call, 310
His name and office bearing, who shall quell
The adversary-Serpent, and bring back
Through the world's wilderness long wander'd Man
Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.
Meanwhile they, in their earthly Canaan plac'd,
Long time shall dwell and prosper, but when sins
National interrupt their publick peace,
Provoking God to raise them enemies;
From whom as oft he saves them penitent,
By Judges first, then under Kings; of whom 320
The second, both for piety renown'd
And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive

Irrevocable, that his regal throne 323
For ever shall endure; the like shall sing
All Prophecy, that of the royal stock
Of David (so I name this king) shall rise
A Son, the Woman's seed to thee foretold,
Foretold to Abraham, as in whom shall trust
All nations; and to kings foretold, of kings
The last; for of his reign shall be no end. 330
But first, a long succession must ensue;
And his next son, for wealth and wisdom fam'd,
The clouded ark of God, till then in tents
Wandering, shall in a glorious temple enshrine.
Such follow him as shall be register'd,
Part good, part bad; of bad the longer scroll;
Whose foul idolatries, and other faults
Heap'd to the popular sum, will so incense
God, as to leave them, and expose their land,
Their city, his temple, and his holy ark, 340
With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey
To that proud city, whose high walls thou saw'st
Left in confusion; Babylon thence call'd.
There in captivity He lets them dwell
The space of seventy years; then brings them back,
Remembering mercy, and his covenant sworn
To David, 'stablish'd as the days of Heaven.
Return'd from Babylon by leave of kings
Their lords, whom God dispos'd, the house of God
They first re-edify; and for a while 350
In mean estate live moderate; till, grown
In wealth and multitude, factious they grow;
But first among the priests dissension springs,
Men who attend the altar, and should most
Endeavour peace: their strife pollution brings
Upon the temple itself: at last they seize

The sceptre, and regard not David's sons; 357
 Then lose it to a stranger, that the true
 Anointed King Messiah might be born
 Barr'd of his right: yet at his birth a star,
 Unseen before in Heaven, proclaims him come;
 And guides the eastern sages, who inquire
 His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold:
 His place of birth a solemn Angel tells
 To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night;
 They gladly thither haste, and by a choir
 Of squadron'd Angels hear his carol sung.
 A virgin is his mother, but his sire
 The power of the Most High: He shall ascend
 The throne hereditary, and bound his reign 370
 With earth's wide bounds, his glory with the heavens.

He ceas'd, discerning Adam with such joy
 Surcharg'd, as had like grief been dew'd in tears,
 Without the vent of words; which these he breath'd.

O prophet of glad tidings, finisher
 Of utmost hope! now clear I understand
 What oft my steadiest thoughts have search'd in vain;
 Why our Great Expectation should be call'd
 The seed of Woman: Virgin mother, hail,
 High in the love of Heaven; yet from my loins 380
 Thou shalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son
 Of God Most High; so God with Man unites!
 Needs must the Serpent now his capital bruise
 Expect with mortal pain: Say, where and when
 Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the victor's heel.

To whom thus Michael. Dream not of their fight
 As of a duel, or the local wounds
 Of head or heel: Not therefore joins the Son
 Manhood to Godhead, with more strength to foil
 Thy enemy; nor so is overcome

Satan, whose fall from Heaven, a deadlier bruise, 391
Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound:
Which He, who comes thy Saviour, shall recure,
Not by destroying Satan, but his works
In thee and in thy seed: Nor can this be
But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,
Obedience to the law of God, impos'd
On penalty of death, and suffering death,
The penalty to thy transgression due,
And due to theirs which out of thine will grow: 400
So only can high Justice rest appaid.¹
The law of God exact he shall fulfil
Both by obedience and by love, though love
Alone fulfil the law; thy punishment
He shall endure, by coming in the flesh
To a reproachful life and cursed death;
Proclaiming life to all who shall believe
In his redemption; and that his obedience,
Imputed, becomes theirs by faith; his merits
To save them, not their own though legal works. 410
For this he shall live hated, be blasphem'd,
Seiz'd on by force, judg'd, and to death condemn'd,
A shameful and accurs'd, nail'd to the cross
By his own nation; slain for bringing life:
But to the cross he nails thy enemies,
The law that is against thee, and the sins
Of all mankind, with him there crucified,
Never to hurt them more who rightly trust
In this his satisfaction; so he dies,
But soon revives: Death over him no power 420
Shall long usurp; ere the third dawning light
Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise
Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,

¹ 'Appaid:' satisfied.

Thy ransom paid, which Man from death redeems, 424
His death for Man, as many as offer'd life
Neglect not, and the benefit embrace
By faith not void of works; This Godlike act
Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldst have died,
In sin for ever lost from life; this act
Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength, 430
Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms;
And fix far deeper in his head their stings
Than temporal death shall bruise the victor's heel,
Or their's whom he redeems; a death, like sleep,
A gentle wafting to immortal life.
Nor after resurrection shall he stay
Longer on earth than certain times to appear
To his disciples, men who in his life
Still follow'd him; to them shall leave in charge
To teach all nations what of him they learn'd, 440
And his salvation; them who shall believe
Baptizing in the profluent stream, the sign
Of washing them from guilt of sin to life
Pure, and in mind prepar'd, if so befall,
For death, like that which the Redeemer died.
All nations they shall teach; for, from that day,
Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins
Salvation shall be preach'd, but to the sons
Of Abraham's faith wherever through the world,
So in his seed all nations shall be blest. 450
Then to the Heaven of Heavens he shall ascend
With victory, triumphing through the air
Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
The Serpent, prince of air, and drag in chains
Through all his realm, and there confounded leave;
Then enter into glory, and resume
His seat at God's right hand, exalted high,

Above all names in Heaven; and thence shall come,
When this world's dissolution shall be ripe, 459
With glory and power to judge both quick and dead;
To judge the unfaithful dead, but to reward
His faithful, and receive them into bliss,
Whether in Heaven or Earth; for then the Earth
Shall all be Paradise, far happier place
Than this of Eden, and far happier days.

So spake the Arch Angel Michaël; then paus'd,
As at the world's great period; and our sire,
Replete with joy and wonder, thus replied.

O Goodness infinite, Goodness immense!
That all this good of evil shall produce, 470
And evil turn to good; more wonderful
Than that which by creation first brought forth
Light out of darkness! Full of doubt I stand,
Whether I should repent me now of sin
By me done and occasion'd; or rejoice
Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring;
To God more glory, more goodwill to men
From God; and over wrath grace shall abound.
But say, if our Deliverer up to Heaven
Must reascend, what will betide the few 480
His faithful, left among the unfaithful herd,
The enemies of truth? Who then shall guide
His people, who defend? Will they not deal
Worse with his followers than with him they dealt?

Be sure they will, said the Angel; but from Heaven
He to his own a Comforter will send,
The promise of the Father, who shall dwell
His Spirit within them; and the law of faith,
Working through love, upon their hearts shall write,
To guide them in all truth; and also arm 490
With spiritual armour, able to resist

Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts ; 492
What man can do against them not afraid,
Though to the death ; against such cruelties
With inward consolations recompens'd,
And oft supported so as shall amaze
Their proudest persecutors ; For the Spirit,
Pour'd first on his Apostles, whom he sends
To evangelize the nations, then on all
Baptiz'd, shall them with wonderous gifts endue 500
To speak all tongues and do all miracles,
As did their Lord before them. Thus they win
Great numbers of each nation to receive
With joy the tidings brought from Heaven : At length
Their ministry perform'd, and race well run,
Their doctrine and their story written left,
They die ; but in their room, as they forewarn,
Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves,
Who all the sacred mysteries of Heaven
To their own vile advantages shall turn 510
Of lucre and ambition ; and the truth
With superstitions and traditions taint,
Left only in those written records pure,
Though not but by the Spirit understood.
Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names,
Places, and titles, and with these to join
Secular power ; though feigning still to act
By spiritual ; to themselves appropriating
The Spirit of God, promis'd alike and given
To all believers ; and, from that pretence, 520
Spiritual laws by carnal power shall force
On every conscience ; laws which none shall find
Left them inroll'd, or what the Spirit within
Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then
But force the Spirit of Grace itself, and bind

His consort Liberty? what, but unbuild 526
 His living temples, built by faith to stand,
 Their own faith, not another's? for, on Earth,
 Who against faith and conscience can be heard
 Infallible? Yet many will presume:
 Whence heavy persecution shall arise
 On all who in the worship persevere
 Of spirit and truth: the rest, far greater part,
 Will deem in outward rites and specious forms
 Religion satisfied: Truth shall retire
 Bestuck with slanderous darts, and works of faith
 Rarely be found: So shall the world go on,
 To good malignant, to bad men benign;
 Under her own weight groaning; till the day
 Appear of respiration¹ to the just, 540
 And vengeance to the wicked, at return
 Of Him so lately promis'd to thy aid,
 The Woman's Seed; obscurely then foretold,
 Now amplier known thy Saviour and thy Lord;
 Last, in the clouds from Heaven to be reveal'd
 In glory of the Father, to dissolve
 Satan with his perverted world; then raise
 From the conflagrant mass, purg'd and refin'd,
 New Heavens, new Earth, ages of endless date,
 Founded in righteousness, and peace, and love; 550
 To bring forth fruits, joy, and eternal bliss!

He ended; and thus Adam last replied.
 How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest,
 Measur'd this transient world, the race of time,
 Till time stand fix'd! Beyond is all abyss,
 Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.
 Greatly instructed I shall hence depart;
 Greatly in peace of thought; and have my fill

¹ 'Respiration:' refreshing. See Acts iii. 19.

Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain; 559
 Beyond which was my folly to aspire.
 Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,
 And love with fear the only God, to walk
 As in His presence; ever to observe
 His providence; and on Him sole depend,
 Merciful over all His works, with good
 Still overcoming evil, and by small
 Accomplishing great things, by things deem'd weak
 Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise
 By simply meek; that suffering for truth's sake
 Is fortitude to highest victory, 570
 And, to the faithful, death the gate of life;
 Taught this by his example, whom I now
 Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest.

To whom thus also the Angel last replied.
 This having learn'd, thou hast attain'd the sum
 Of wisdom: hope no higher, though all the stars
 Thou knew'st by name, and all the ethereal powers,
 All secrets of the deep, all Nature's works,
 Or works of God in Heaven, Air, Earth, or Sea,
 And all the riches of this world enjoy'dst, 580
 And all the rule, one empire; only add
 Deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith,
 Add virtue, patience, temperance; add love,
 By name to come call'd charity, the soul
 Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loath
 To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess
 A Paradise within thee, happier far.—
 Let us descend now therefore from this top
 Of speculation: for the hour precise
 Exacts our parting hence: and see! the guards, 590
 By me encamp'd on yonder hill, expect
 Their motion; at whose front a flaming sword,

In signal of remove, waves fiercely round. 593
We may no longer stay; go, waken Eve;
Her also I with gentle dreams have calm'd,
Portending good, and all her spirits compos'd
To meek submission: thou, at season fit,
Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard;
Chiefly, what may concern her faith to know,
The great deliverance by her seed to come 600
(For by the Woman's seed) on all mankind:
That ye may live, which will be many days,
Both in one faith unanimous, though sad,
With cause, for evils past; yet much more cheer'd
With meditation on the happy end.

He ended, and they both descend the hill;
Descended, Adam to the bower, where Eve
Lay sleeping, ran before; but found her wak'd;
And thus with words not sad she him receiv'd. 609

Whence thou return'st, and whither went'st, I know;
For God is also in sleep; and dreams advise,
Which He hath sent propitious, some great good
Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress
Wearied I fell asleep: But now lead on;
In me is no delay; with thee to go,
Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,
Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me
Art all things under Heaven, all places thou,
Who for my wilful crime are banish'd hence.
This farther consolation yet secure 620
I carry hence; though all by me is lost,
Such favour I unworthy am vouchsaf'd,
By me the Promis'd Seed shall all restore.

So spake our mother Eve; and Adam heard,
Well pleas'd but answer'd not: For now, too nigh
The Arch-Angel stood; and from the other hill

To their fix'd station, all in bright array 627
The Cherubim descended; on the ground
Gliding meteorous, as evening mist
Risen from a river o'er the marish glides,
And gathers ground fast at the labourer's heel
Homeward returning. High in front advanc'd,
The brandish'd sword of God before them blaz'd,
Fierce as a comet; which with torrid heat,
And vapour as the Libyan air adust,
Began to parch that temperate clime: whereat
In either hand the hastening Angel caught
Our lingering parents, and to the eastern gate
Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast
To the subjected plain; then disappear'd. 640
They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
Wav'd over by that flaming brand; the gate
With dreadful faces throng'd, and fiery arms.
Some natural tears they dropt, but wip'd them soon;
The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide:
They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary way.

The first thing that I observed, as I stepped
out of the boat, was a vast expanse of water,
stretching out to the horizon. The sun was
low in the sky, and the water was calm.
I walked along the shore, looking at the
beaches and the small villages that were
scattered along the coast. The people were
kind and friendly, and they welcomed me
with open arms. I stayed in a simple
house, and I was treated like a guest.
The food was delicious, and the people
were very hospitable. I was very
impressed by the way they lived, and
I was very happy to be there.
I stayed for a few days, and then I
went back to the boat. I was very
tired, but I was very happy. I was
very grateful to the people who had
taken care of me. I was very
impressed by the way they lived, and
I was very happy to be there.
I stayed for a few days, and then I
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PARADISE REGAINED.

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BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed. Invocation of the Holy Spirit.—The Poem opens with John baptizing at the river Jordan. Jesus coming there is baptized; and is attested by the descent of the Holy Ghost, and by a voice from Heaven, to be the Son of God. Satan, who is present, upon this immediately flies up into the regions of the air: where, summoning his Infernal Council, he acquaints them with his apprehensions that Jesus is that seed of the Woman, destined to destroy all their power; and points out to them the immediate necessity of bringing the matter to proof, and of attempting, by snares and fraud, to counteract and defeat the person, from whom they had so much to dread. This office he offers himself to undertake; and, his offer being accepted, sets out on his enterprise.—In the meantime, God, in the assembly of holy Angels, declares that he has given up his Son to be tempted by Satan; but foretells that the tempter shall be completely defeated by him:—upon which the Angels sing a hymn of triumph. Jesus is led up by the Spirit into the wilderness, while he is meditating on the commencement of his great office of Saviour of Mankind. Pursuing his meditations, he narrates, in a soliloquy, what divine and philanthropic impulses he had felt from his early youth, and how his mother, Mary, on perceiving these dispositions in him, had acquainted him with the circumstances of his birth, and informed him that he was no less a person than the Son of God; to which he adds what his own inquiries and reflections had supplied in confirmation of this great truth, and particularly dwells on the recent attestation of it at the river Jordan. Our Lord passes forty days, fasting, in the wilderness; where the wild beasts become mild and harmless in his presence. Satan now appears under the form of an old peasant; and enters into discourse with our Lord, wondering what could have brought him alone into so dangerous a place, and at the same time professing to recognize him for the person lately acknowledged by John, at the river Jordan, to be the Son of God. Jesus briefly replies. Satan rejoins with a description of the difficulty of supporting life in the wilderness; and entreats Jesus, if he really be the Son of God, to manifest his divine power, by changing some of the stones into bread. Jesus reproves him, and at the same time tells him that he knows who he is. Satan instantly avows himself, and offers an artful apology for himself and his conduct. Our blessed Lord severely reprimands him, and refutes every

part of his justification. Satan, with much semblance of humility, still endeavours to justify himself; and, professing his admiration of Jesus, and his regard for virtue, requests to be permitted at a future time to hear more of his conversation; but is answered, that this must be as he shall find permission from above. Satan then disappears, and the Book closes with a short description of night coming on in the desert.

I, WHO erewhile the happy garden sung
By one Man's disobedience lost, now sing
Recover'd Paradise to all mankind,
By one Man's firm obedience fully tried
Through all temptation, and the Tempter foil'd
In all his wiles, defeated and repuls'd,
And Eden rais'd in the waste wilderness.

Thou Spirit, who ledst this glorious eremite
Into the desert, his victorious field,
Against the spiritual foe, and brought'st him thence 10
By proof the undoubted Son of God, inspire,
As thou art wont, my prompted song, else mute;
And bear, through highth or depth of Nature's bounds,
With prosperous wing full summ'd,¹ to tell of deeds
Above heroick, though in secret done
And unrecorded left through many an age;
Worthy to have not remain'd so long unsung.

Now had the great Proclaimer, with a voice
More awful than the sound of trumpet, cried
Repentance, and Heaven's kingdom nigh at hand 20
To all baptiz'd: To his great baptism flock'd
With awe the regions round, and with them came
From Nazareth the son of Joseph deem'd
To the flood Jordan; came, as then obscure,
Unmark'd, unknown; but him the Baptist soon
Descried, divinely warn'd, and witness bore
As to his worthier, and would have resign'd
To him his heavenly office; nor was long

¹ 'Summ'd': a term in falconry for a full-grown wing.

His witness unconfirm'd : On him baptiz'd 29
 Heaven open'd, and in likeness of a dove
 The Spirit descended, while the Father's voice
 From Heaven pronounc'd him his beloved Son.
 That heard the Adversary, who, roving still
 About the world, at that assembly fam'd
 Would not be last, and with the voice divine
 Nigh thunder-struck, the exalted Man, to whom
 Such high attest was given, awhile survey'd
 With wonder ; then, with envy fraught and rage,
 Flies to his place, nor rests, but in mid air
 To council summons all his mighty peers, 40
 Within thick clouds and dark tenfold involv'd,
 A gloomy consistory ; and them amidst,
 With looks aghast and sad, he thus bespake.

O ancient Powers of air, and this wide world
 (For much more willingly I mention air,
 This our old conquest, than remember Hell,
 Our hated habitation), well ye know
 How many ages, as the years of men,
 This universe we have possess'd and rul'd,
 In manner at our will, the affairs of earth, 50
 Since Adam and his facile consort Eve
 Lost Paradise, deceiv'd by me ; though since
 With dread attending¹ when that fatal wound
 Shall be inflicted by the seed of Eve
 Upon my head. Long the decrees of Heaven
 Delay, for longest time to Him is short ;
 And now, too soon for us, the circling hours
 This dreaded time have compass'd, wherein we
 Must bide the stroke of that long-threaten'd wound
 (At least if so we can, and by the head 60
 Broken be not intended all our power

¹ 'Attending:' i.e., waiting.

To be infring'd, our freedom and our being, 62
In this fair empire won of earth and air),
For this ill news I bring, the Woman's Seed,
Destin'd to this, is late of Woman born.
His birth to our just fear gave no small cause :
But his growth now to youth's full flower, displaying
All virtue, grace, and wisdom to achieve
Things highest, greatest, multiplies my fear.
Before him a great Prophet, to proclaim 70
His coming, is sent harbinger, who all
Invites, and in the consecrated stream
Pretends to wash off sin, and fit them, so
Purified, to receive him pure, or rather
To do him honour as their king: All come,
And he himself among them was baptiz'd;
Not thence to be more pure, but to receive
The testimony of Heaven, that who he is
Thenceforth the nations may not doubt ; I saw
The Prophet do him reverence ; on him, rising 80
Out of the water, Heaven above the clouds
Unfold her crystal doors ; thence on his head
A perfect dove descend (whate'er it meant),
And out of Heaven the sovran voice I heard,
"This is my Son belov'd, in him am pleas'd."
His mother then is mortal, but his Sire
He who obtains the monarchy of Heaven :
And what will He not do to advance his Son ?
His first-begot we know, and sore have felt,
When his fierce thunder drove us to the deep : 90
Who this is we must learn ; for Man he seems
In all his lineaments, though in his face
The glimpses of his Father's glory shine.
Ye see our danger on the utmost edge
Of hazard, which admits no long debate,

But must with something sudden be oppos'd 96
(Not force, but well-couch'd fraud, well-woven snares),
Ere in the head of nations he appear,
Their king, their leader, and supreme on earth.
I, when no other durst, sole undertook
The dismal expedition to find out
And ruin Adam ; and the exploit perform'd
Successfully : a calmer voyage now
Will waft me ; and the way, found prosperous once,
Induces best to hope of like success.

He ended, and his words impression left
Of much amazement to the infernal crew,
Distracted and surpris'd with deep dismay
At these sad tidings ; but no time was then
For long indulgence to their fears or grief : 110
Unanimous they all commit the care
And management of this main enterprise
To him, their great dictator, whose attempt
At first against mankind so well had thriv'd
In Adam's overthrow, and led their march
From Hell's deep-vaulted den to dwell in light,
Regents, and potentates, and kings, yea gods,
Of many a pleasant realm and province wide.
So to the coast of Jordan he directs
His easy steps, girded with snaky wiles, 120
Where he might likeliest find this new-declar'd,
This Man of men, attested Son of God,
Temptation and all guile on him to try ;
So to subvert whom he suspected rais'd
To end his reign on earth, so long enjoy'd :
But, contrary, unweeting he fulfill'd
The purpos'd counsel, pre-ordain'd and fix'd,
Of the Most High ; who, in full frequency bright
Of Angels, thus to Gabriel smiling spake :

Gabriel, this day by proof thou shalt behold, 130
Thou and all Angels conversant on earth
With man or men's affairs, how I begin
To verify that solemn message, late
On which I sent thee to the Virgin pure
In Galilee, that she should bear a son,
Great in renown, and call'd the Son of God;
Then told'st her, doubting how these things could be
To her a virgin, that on her should come
The Holy Ghost, and the power of the Highest
O'ersadow her. This Man, born and now upgrown,
To show him worthy of his birth divine 141
And high prediction, henceforth I expose
To Satan; let him tempt, and now assay
His utmost subtlety, because he boasts
And vaunts of his great cunning to the throng
Of his apostasy: he might have learnt
Less overweening, since he fail'd in Job,
Whose constant perseverance overcame
Whate'er his cruel malice could invent.
He now shall know I can produce a Man, 150
Of female seed, far abler to resist
All his solicitations, and at length
All his vast force, and drive him back to Hell;
Winning, by conquest, what the first Man lost,
By fallacy surpris'd. But first I mean
To exercise him in the wilderness;
There he shall first lay down the rudiments
Of his great warfare, ere I send him forth
To conquer Sin and Death, the two grand foes,
By humiliation and strong sufferance: 160
His weakness shall o'ercome Satanick strength,
And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh,
That all the Angels and ethereal Powers,

They now, and men hereafter, may discern, 164
 From what consummate virtue I have chose
 This perfect Man, by merit call'd my Son,
 To earn salvation for the sons of men.

So spake the Eternal Father, and all Heaven
 Admiring stood a space, then into hymns
 Burst forth, and in celestial measures mov'd 170
 Circling the throne and singing, while the hand
 Sung with the voice, and this the argument.

Victory and triumph to the Son of God,
 Now entering his great duel, not of arms,
 But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles!
 The Father knows the Son; therefore secure
 Ventures his filial virtue, though untried,
 Against whate'er may tempt, whate'er seduce,
 Allure, or terrify, or undermine.
 Be frustrate, all ye stratagems of Hell, 180
 And, devilish machinations, come to nought!

So they in Heaven their odes and vigils tun'd:
 Meanwhile the Son of God, who yet some days
 Lodg'd in Bethabara,¹ where John baptiz'd,
 Musing, and much revolving in his breast,
 How best the mighty work he might begin
 Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first
 Publish his Godlike office now mature,
 One day forth walk'd alone, the Spirit leading
 And his deep thoughts, the better to converse 190
 With solitude, till, far from track of men,
 Thought following thought, and step by step led on,
 He enter'd now the bordering desert wild,
 And, with dark shades and rocks environ'd round,
 His holy meditations thus pursu'd.

O, what a multitude of thoughts at once

¹ 'Bethabara:' see John i. 28.

Awaken'd in me swarm, while I consider 197
What from within I feel myself, and hear
What from without comes often to my ears,
Ill sorting with my present state compar'd!
When I was yet a child, no childish play
To me was pleasing; all my mind was set
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do
What might be publick good; myself I thought
Born to that end, born to promote all truth,
All righteous things: therefore, above my years,
The law of God I read, and found it sweet,
Made it my whole delight, and in it grew
To such perfection, that, ere yet my age
Had measur'd twice six years, at our great feast 210
I went into the temple, there to hear
The teachers of our law, and to propose
What might improve my knowledge or their own;
And was admir'd by all: yet this not all
To which my spirit aspir'd; victorious deeds
Flam'd in my heart, heroick acts; one while
To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke;
Then to subdue and quell, o'er all the earth,
Brute violence and proud tyrannick power,
Till truth were freed, and equity restor'd: 220
Yet held it more humane, more heavenly, first
By winning words to conquer willing hearts,
And make persuasion do the work of fear;
At least to try, and teach the erring soul,
Not wilfully misdoing, but unaware
Miled; the stubborn only to subdue.
These growing thoughts my mother soon perceiving,
By words at times cast forth, inly rejoic'd,
And said to me apart; "High are thy thoughts,
O Son, but nourish them, and let them soar

To what highth sacred virtue and true worth 231
Can raise them, though above example high ;
By matchless deeds express thy matchless Sire,
For know, thou art no son of mortal man ;
Though men esteem thee low of parentage,
Thy Father is the Eternal King who rules
All Heaven and Earth, Angels and sons of men ;
A messenger from God foretold thy birth
Conceiv'd in me a virgin ; he foretold,
Thou shouldst be great, and sit on David's throne, 240
And of thy kingdom there should be no end.
At thy nativity, a glorious quire
Of Angels, in the fields of Bethlehem, sung
To shepherds, watching at their folds by night,
And told them the Messiah now was born,
Where they might see him, and to thee they came,
Directed to the manger where thou lay'st,
For in the inn was left no better room :
A star, not seen before, in Heaven appearing,
Guided the wise men thither from the east, 250
To honour thee with incense, myrrh, and gold ;
By whose bright course led on they found the place,
Affirming it thy star, new-graven in Heaven,
By which they knew the King of Israel born.
Just Simeon and prophetick Anna, warn'd
By vision, found thee in the temple, and spake,
Before the altar and the vested priest,
Like things of thee to all that present stood."—
This having heard, straight I again revolv'd
The Law and Prophets, searching what was writ 260
Concerning the Messiah, to our scribes
Known partly, and soon found, of whom they spake
I am ; this chiefly, that my way must lie
Through many a hard assay, even to the death,

Ere I the promis'd kingdom can attain, 265
Or work redemption for mankind, whose sins'
Full weight must be transferr'd upon my head.
Yet, neither thus dishearten'd or dismay'd,
The time prefix'd I waited ; when behold
The Baptist (of whose birth I oft had heard, 270
Not knew by sight), now come, who was to come
Before Messiah, and his way prepare !
I, as all others, to his baptism came,
Which I believ'd was from above ; but he
Straight knew me, and with loudest voice proclaim'd
Me him (for it was shewn him so from Heaven),
Me him, whose harbinger he was ; and first
Refus'd on me his baptism to confer,
As much his greater, and was hardly won :
But, as I rose out of the laving stream, 280
Heaven open'd her eternal doors, from whence
The Spirit descended on me like a dove ;
And last, the sum of all, my Father's voice,
Audibly heard from Heaven, pronounc'd me his,
Me his beloved Son, in whom alone
He was well pleas'd ; by which I knew the time
Now full, that I no more should live obscure,
But openly begin, as best becomes,
The authority which I deriv'd from Heaven.
And now by some strong motion I am led 290
Into this wilderness, to what intent
I learn not yet ; perhaps I need not know,
For what concerns my knowledge God reveals.

So spake our Morning-Star, then in his rise,
And, looking round, on every side beheld
A pathless desart, dusk with horrid shades ;
The way he came not having mark'd, return
Was difficult, by human steps untrod ;

And he still on was led, but with such thoughts 299
 Accompanied of things past and to come
 Lodg'd in his breast, as well might recommend
 Such solitude before choicest society.
 Full forty days he pass'd, whether on hill
 Sometimes, anon on shady vale, each night
 Under the covert of some ancient oak
 Or cedar to defend him from the dew,
 Or harbour'd in one cave, is not reveal'd ;
 Nor tasted human food, nor hunger felt,
 Till those days ended ; hunger'd then at last
 Among wild beasts : they at his sight grew mild, 310
 Nor sleeping him nor waking harm'd ; his walk
 The fiery serpent fled and noxious worm,
 The lion and fierce tiger glar'd aloof.
 But now an aged man in rural weeds,
 Following, as seem'd, the quest of some stray ewe,
 Or wither'd sticks to gather, which might serve
 Against a winter's day, when winds blow keen,
 To warm him wet return'd from field at eve,
 He saw approach, who first with curious eye
 Perus'd him, then with words thus utter'd spake : 320

Sir, what ill chance hath brought thee to this place
 So far from path or road of men, who pass
 In troop or caravan? for single none
 Durst ever, who return'd, and dropt not here
 His carcass, pin'd with hunger and with drouth.
 I ask the rather, and the more admire,
 For that to me thou seem'st the Man, whom late
 Our new baptizing Prophet at the ford
 Of Jordan honour'd so, and call'd the Son
 Of God : I saw and heard, for we sometimes 330
 Who dwell this wild, constrain'd by want, come forth
 To town or village nigh (nighest is far),

Where aught we hear, and curious are to hear 333
What happens new ; fame also finds us out.

To whom the Son of God : Who brought me hither,
Will bring me hence ; no other guide I seek.

By miracle he may, replied the swain ;
What other way I see not ; for we here
Live on tough roots and stubs, to thirst inur'd
More than the camel, and to drink go far, 340
Men to much misery and hardship born :
But, if thou be the Son of God, command
That out of these hard stones be made thee bread,
So shalt thou save thyself, and us relieve
With food, whereof we wretched seldom taste.

He ended, and the Son of God replied.
Think'st thou such force in bread ? Is it not written
(For I discern thee other than thou seem'st),
Man lives not by bread only, but each word
Proceeding from the mouth of God, who fed 350
Our fathers here with manna ? In the mount
Moses was forty days, nor eat, nor drank ;
And forty days Elijah, without food,
Wander'd this barren waste ; the same I now :
Why dost thou then suggest to me distrust,
Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art ?

Whom thus answer'd the Arch-Fiend, now undisguis'd.
'Tis true I am that Spirit unfortunate,
Who, leagu'd with millions more in rash revolt,
Kept not my happy station, but was driven 360
With them from bliss to the bottomless deep,
Yet to that hideous place not so confin'd
By rigour unconniving, but that oft,
Leaving my dolorous prison, I enjoy
Large liberty to round this globe of earth,
Or range in the air ; nor from the Heaven of Heavens

Hath he excluded my resort sometimes. 367
I came among the sons of God, when he
Gave up into my hands Uzzean Job
To prove him and illustrate his high worth ;
And, when to all his Angels he propos'd
To draw the proud king Ahab into fraud
That he might fall in Ramoth, they demurring,
I undertook the office, and the tongues
Of all his flattering prophets glibb'd with lies
To his destruction, as I had in charge ;
For what he bids I do. Though I have lost
Much lustre of my native brightness, lost
To be belov'd of God, I have not lost
To love, at least contemplate and admire, 380
What I see excellent in good, or fair,
Or virtuous ; I should so have lost all sense :
What can be then less in me than desire
To see thee and approach thee, whom I know
Declar'd the Son of God, to hear attent
Thy wisdom, and behold thy God-like deeds ?
Men generally think me much a foe
To all mankind : why should I ? they to me
Never did wrong or violence ; by them
I lost not what I lost, rather by them 390
I gain'd what I have gain'd, and with them dwell,
Copartner in these regions of the world,
If not disposer ; lend them oft my aid,
Oft my advice by presages and signs,
And answers, oracles, portents, and dreams,
Whereby they may direct their future life.
Envy they say excites me, thus to gain
Companions of my misery and woe.
At first it may be ; but, long since with woe
Nearer acquainted, now I feel by proof,

That fellowship in pain divides not smart, 401
Nor lightens aught each man's peculiar load.
Small consolation then, were man adjoin'd :
This wounds me most, (what can it less ?) that Man,
Man fallen shall be restor'd, I never more.

To whom our Saviour sternly thus replied.
Deservedly thou griev'st, compos'd of lies
From the beginning, and in lies wilt end ;
Who boast'st release from Hell, and leave to come
Into the Heaven of Heavens : Thou com'st indeed, 410
As a poor miserable captive thrall
Comes to the place where he before had sat
Among the prime in splendour, now depos'd,
Ejected, emptied, gaz'd, unpitied, shunn'd,
A spectacle of ruin, or of scorn,
To all the host of Heaven : The happy place
Imparts to thee no happiness, no joy ;
Rather inflames thy torment ; representing
Lost bliss, to thee no more communicable,
So never more in Hell than when in Heaven. 420
But thou art serviceable to Heaven's King.
Wilt thou impute to obedience what thy fear
Extorts, or pleasure to do ill excites ?
What but thy malice mov'd thee to misdeem
Of righteous Job, then cruelly to afflict him
With all inflictions ? but his patience won.
The other service was thy chosen task,
To be a liar in four hundred mouths ;
For lying is thy sustenance, thy food.
Yet thou pretend'st to truth : all oracles 430
By thee are given, and what confess'd more true
Among the nations ? that hath been thy craft,
By mixing somewhat true to vent more lies.
But what have been thy answers, what but dark,

Ambiguous, and with double sense deluding, 435
Which they who ask'd have seldom understood,
And not well understood as good not known ?
Who ever by consulting at thy shrine
Return'd the wiser, or the more instruct,
To fly or follow what concern'd him most, 440
And run not sooner to his fatal snare ?
For God hath justly given the nations up
To thy delusions ; justly, since they fell
Idolatrous : but, when his purpose is
Among them to declare his providence
To thee not known, whence hast thou then thy truth,
But from him, or his Angels president
In every province, who, themselves disdaining
To approach thy temples, give thee in command
What, to the smallest tittle, thou shalt say 450
To thy adorers ? Thou with trembling fear,
Or like a fawning parasite, obey'st :
Then to thyself ascrib'st the truth foretold.
But this thy glory shall be soon retrench'd ;
No more shalt thou by oracling abuse
The Gentiles ; henceforth oracles are ceas'd,
And thou no more with pomp or sacrifice
Shalt be inquir'd at Delphos, or elsewhere ;
At least in vain, for they shall find thee mute.
God hath now sent his living oracle 460
Into the world to teach his final will,
And sends his Spirit of truth henceforth to dwell
In pious hearts, an inward oracle
To all truth requisite for men to know.

So spake our Saviour ; but the subtle Fiend,
Though inly stung with anger and disdain,
Dissembled, and this answer smooth return'd :
Sharply thou hast insisted on rebuke,

And urg'd me hard with doings, which not will 469
 But misery hath wrested from me. Where
 Easily canst thou find one miserable,
 And not enforc'd oft-times to part from truth,
 If it may stand him more in stead to lie,
 Say and unsay, feign, flatter, or abjure?
 But thou art plac'd above me, thou art Lord;
 From thee I can, and must submit, endure
 Check or reproof, and glad to 'scape so quit.
 Hard are the ways of truth, and rough to walk,
 Smooth on the tongue discours'd, pleasing to the ear,
 And tunable as sylvan pipe or song; 480
 What wonder then if I delight to hear
 Her dictates from thy mouth? Most men admire
 Virtue, who follow not her lore: permit me
 To hear thee when I come (since no man comes),
 And talk at least, though I despair to attain.
 Thy Father, who is holy, wise, and pure,
 Suffers the hypocrite or atheous priest
 To tread his sacred courts, and minister
 About his altar, handling holy things,
 Praying or vowing; and vouchsaf'd his voice 490
 To Balaam reprobate, a prophet yet
 Inspir'd: disdain not such access to me.

To whom our Saviour, with unalter'd brow:
 Thy coming hither, though I know thy scope,
 I bid not, or forbid; do as thou find'st
 Permission from above; thou canst not more.

He added not; and Satan, bowing low
 His gray dissimulation,¹ disappear'd
 Into thin air diffus'd: for now began
 Night with her sullen wings to double-shade 500
 The desert; fowls in their clay nests were couch'd;
 And now wild beasts came forth the woods to roam.

¹ 'Gray dissimulation:' head gray with dissimulation.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

The disciples of Jesus, uneasy at his long absence, reason amongst themselves concerning it. Mary also gives vent to her maternal anxiety: in the expression of which she recapitulates many circumstances respecting the birth and early life of her Son.—Satan again meets his Infernal Council, reports the bad success of his first temptation of our Blessed Lord, and calls upon them for counsel and assistance. Belial proposes the tempting of Jesus with women. Satan rebukes Belial for his dissoluteness, charging on him all the profligacy of that kind ascribed by the poets to the Heathen Gods, and rejects his proposal as in no respect likely to succeed. Satan then suggests other modes of temptation, particularly proposing to avail himself of the circumstance of our Lord's hungering; and, taking a band of chosen Spirits with him, returns to resume his enterprise.—Jesus hungers in the desert.—Night comes on; the manner in which our Saviour passes the night is described.—Morning advances.—Satan again appears to Jesus, and, after expressing wonder that he should be so entirely neglected in the wilderness, where others had been miraculously fed, tempts him with a sumptuous banquet of the most luxurious kind. This he rejects, and the banquet vanishes.—Satan, finding our Lord not to be assailed on the ground of appetite, tempts him again by offering him riches, as the means of acquiring power: This Jesus also rejects, producing many instances of great actions performed by persons under virtuous poverty, and specifying the danger of riches, and the cares and pains inseparable from power and greatness.

MEANWHILE the new-baptiz'd, who yet remain'd
At Jordan with the Baptist, and had seen
Him whom they heard so late expressly call'd
Jesus Messiah, Son of God declar'd,
And on that high authority had believ'd,
And with him talk'd, and with him lodg'd; I mean
Andrew and Simon, famous after known,
With others though in Holy Writ not nam'd;
Now missing him, their joy so lately found
(So lately found, and so abruptly gone),

Began to doubt, and doubted many days, 11
 And as the days encreas'd, encreas'd their doubt.
 Sometimes they thought he might be only shown,
 And for a time caught up to God, as once
 Moses was in the mount and missing long,
 And the great Thisbite, who on fiery wheels
 Rode up to Heaven, yet once again to come.
 Therefore, as those young prophets then with care
 Sought lost Elijah, so in each place these
 Nigh to Bethabara, in Jericho 20
 The city of palms, Ænon, and Salem¹ old,
 Machærus,² and each town or city wall'd
 On this side the broad lake Genezaret,
 Or in Peræa ; but return'd in vain.
 Then on the bank of Jordan, by a creek,
 Where winds with reeds and osiers whispering play,
 Plain fishermen (no greater men them call),
 Close in a cottage low together got,
 Their unexpected loss and complaints out breath'd.
 Alas, from what high hope to what relapse 30
 Unlook'd for are we fallen ! our eyes beheld
 Messiah certainly now come, so long
 Expected of our fathers ; we have heard
 His words, his wisdom full of grace and truth ;
 Now, now, for sure, deliverance is at hand,
 The kingdom shall to Israel be restor'd ;
 Thus we rejoic'd, but soon our joy is turn'd
 Into perplexity and new amaze :
 For whither is he gone, what accident
 Hath rapt him from us ? will he now retire 40
 After appearance, and again prolong
 Our expectation ? God of Israël,
 Send thy Messiah forth, the time is come !

¹ 'Ænon and Salem : ' see John iii. 23.—² 'Machærus : ' a castle beyond Jordan.

Behold the kings of the earth, how they oppress 44
 Thy chosen ; to what highth their power unjust
 They have exalted, and behind them cast
 All fear of thee ; arise, and vindicate
 Thy glory ; free thy people from their yoke !
 But let us wait ; thus far He hath perform'd,
 Sent his Anointed, and to us reveal'd him, 50
 By his great Prophet, pointed at and shown
 In publick, and with him we have convers'd ;
 Let us be glad of this, and all our fears
 Lay on his Providence ; He will not fail,
 Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recall,
 Mock us with his blest sight, then snatch him hence ;
 Soon we shall see our Hope, our Joy, return.

Thus they, out of their complaints, new hope resume
 To find whom at the first they found unsought :
 But, to his mother Mary, when she saw 60
 Others return'd from Baptism, not her Son,
 Nor left at Jordan, tidings of him none,
 Within her breast though calm, her breast though pure,
 Motherly cares and fears got head, and rais'd
 Some troubled thoughts, which she in sighs thus clad.

O, what avails me now that honour high
 To have conceiv'd of God, or that salute,
 "Hail, highly favour'd, among women blest !"
 While I to sorrows am no less advanc'd,
 And fears as eminent, above the lot 70
 Of other women, by the birth I bore ;
 In such a season born, when scarce a shed
 Could be obtain'd to shelter him or me
 From the bleak air ; a stable was our warmth,
 A manger his ; yet soon enforc'd to fly
 Thence into Egypt, till the murderous king
 Were dead, who sought his life, and missing fill'd

With infant blood the streets of Bethlehem ; 78
From Egypt home return'd, in Nazareth
Hath been our dwelling many years ; his life
Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,
Little suspicious to any king ; but now,
Full grown to man, acknowledg'd, as I hear,
By John the Baptist, and in public shown,
Son own'd from Heaven by his Father's voice,
I look'd for some great change ; to honour ? no ;
But trouble, as old Simeon plain foretold,
That to the fall and rising he should be
Of many in Israël, and to a sign
Spoken against, that through my very soul 90
A sword shall pierce : This is my favour'd lot,
My exaltation to afflictions high ;
Afflicted I may be, it seems, and blest ;
I will not argue that, nor will repine.
But where delays he now ? some great intent
Conceals him : When twelve years he scarce had seen,
I lost him, but so found, as well I saw
He could not lose himself, but went about
His Father's business : what he meant I mus'd,
Since understand ; much more his absence now 100
Thus long to some great purpose he obscures.
But I to wait with patience am inur'd ;
My heart hath been a storehouse long of things
And sayings laid up, portending strange events.
Thus Mary, pondering oft, and oft to mind
Recalling what remarkably had pass'd
Since first her salutation heard, with thoughts
Meekly compos'd awaited the fulfilling :
The while her Son, tracing the desert wild,
Sole, but with holiest meditations fed, 110
Into himself descended, and at once

All his great work to come before him set ; 112
 How to begin, how to accomplish best
 His end of being on earth, and mission high :
 For Satan, with sly preface to return,
 Had left him vacant, and with speed was gone
 Up to the middle region of thick air,
 Where all his potentates in council sat ;
 There, without sign of boast, or sign of joy,
 Solicitous and blank, he thus began. 120

Princes, Heaven's ancient Sons, ethereal Thrones ;
 Demonian Spirits now, from the element
 Each of his reign allotted, rightlier call'd
 Powers of fire, air, water, and earth beneath !
 (So may we hold our place and these mild seats
 Without new trouble), such an enemy
 Is risen to invade us, who no less
 Threatens than our expulsion down to Hell ;
 I, as I undertook, and with the vote
 Consenting in full frequency was impower'd, 130
 Have found him, view'd him, tasted him ; but find
 Far other labour to be undergone
 Than when I dealt with Adam, first of Men,
 Though Adam by his wife's allurements fell,
 However to this Man inferiour far ;
 If he be Man by mother's side, at least
 With more than human gifts from Heaven adorn'd,
 Perfections absolute, graces divine,
 And amplitude of mind to greatest deeds.
 Therefore I am return'd, lest confidence 140
 Of my success with Eve in Paradise
 Deceive ye to persuasion over-sure
 Of like succeeding here : I summon all
 Rather to be in readiness, with hand

Or counsel to assist ; lest I, who erst 145
Thought none my equal, now be over-match'd.

So spake the old Serpent, doubting ; and from all
With clamour was assur'd their utmost aid
At his command : when from amidst them rose
Belial, the dissolutes Spirit that fell, 150
The sensuallest, and, after Asmodai,¹
The fleshliest Incubus ; and thus advis'd.

Set women in his eye, and in his walk,
Among daughters of men the fairest found :
Many are in each region passing fair
As the noon sky ; more like to goddesses
Than mortal creatures ; graceful and discreet ;
Expert in amorous arts, enchanting tongues
Persuasive, virgin majesty with mild
And sweet allay'd, yet terrible to approach ; 160
Skill'd to retire, and, in retiring, draw
Hearts after them tangled in amorous nets.
Such object hath the power to soften and tame
Severest temper, smooth the rugged'st brow,
Enerve, and with voluptuous hope dissolve,
Draw out with credulous desire, and lead
At will the manliest, resolute breast,
As the magnetick hardest iron draws.
Women, when nothing else, beguil'd the heart
Of wisest Solomon, and made him build, 170
And made him bow, to the gods of his wives.

To whom quick answer Satan thus return'd.
Belial, in much uneven scale thou weigh'st
All others by thyself ; because of old
Thou thyself doat'dst on womankind, admiring
Their shape, their colour, and attractive grace,
None are, thou think'st, but taken with such toys.

¹ ' Asmodai : ' see Tobit.

Before the Flood thou with thy lusty crew, 178
 False titled sons of God, roaming the earth
 Cast wanton eyes on the daughters of men,
 And coupled with them, and begot a race.
 Have we not seen, or by relation heard,
 In courts and regal chambers how thou lurk'st
 In wood or grove, by mossy fountain side,
 In valley or green meadow, to way-lay
 Some beauty rare, Calisto,¹ Clymene,
 Daphne, or Semele, Antiopa,
 Or Amymone, Syrinx, many more
 Too long : then lay'st thy scapes on names adored,
 Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter, or Pan, 190
 Satyr, or Faun, or Sylvan ? But these haunts
 Delight not all ; among the sons of men,
 How many have with a smile made small account
 Of Beauty and her lures, easily scorn'd
 All her assaults, on worthier things intent !
 Remember that Pellean² conquerour,
 A youth, how all the beauties of the East
 He slightly view'd, and slightly overpass'd ;
 How he, surnam'd of Africa,³ dismiss'd,
 In his prime youth, the fair Iberian maid. 200
 For Solomon, he liv'd at ease, and full
 Of honour, wealth, high fare, aim'd not beyond
 Higher design than to enjoy his state ;
 Thence to the bait of women lay expos'd :
 But he, whom we attempt, is wiser far
 Than Solomon, of more exalted mind,
 Made and set wholly on the accomplishment
 Of greatest things. What woman will you find,
 Though of this age the wonder and the fame,

¹ 'Calisto' and the rest : see Ovid.—² 'Pellean : ' Alexander the Great, after the battle of Issus.—³ 'Of Africa : ' Scipio Africanus.

On whom his leisure will vouchsafe an eye 210
Of fond desire? Or should she, confident,
As sitting queen ador'd on Beauty's throne,
Descend with all her winning charms begirt
To enamour, as the zone of Venus once
Wrought that effect on Jove, so fables tell;
How would one look from his majestick brow,
Seated as on the top of Virtue's hill,
Discountenance her despis'd, and put to rout
All her array; her female pride deject,
Or turn to reverent awe! for Beauty stands 220
In the admiration only of weak minds
Led captive; cease to admire, and all her plumes
Fall flat, and shrink into a trivial toy,
At every sudden slighting quite abash'd.
Therefore with manlier objects we must try
His constancy; with such as have more show
Of worth, of honour, glory, and popular praise,
Rocks, whereon greatest men have ofttest wreck'd;
Or that which only seems to satisfy
Lawful desires of nature, not beyond; 230
And now I know he hungers, where no food
Is to be found, in the wide wilderness:
The rest commit to me; I shall let pass
No advantage, and his strength as oft assay.

He ceas'd, and heard their grant in loud acclaim;
Then forthwith to him takes a chosen band
Of Spirits, likest to himself in guile,
To be at hand, and at his beck appear,
If cause were to unfold some active scene
Of various persons, each to know his part: 240
Then to the desart takes with these his flight;
Where still from shade to shade, the Son of God

After forty days' fasting had remain'd, 243
 Now hungering first, and to himself thus said.

Where will this end ? four times ten days I've pass'd
 Wandering this woody maze, and human food
 Nor tasted, nor had appetite ; that fast
 To virtue I impute not, or count part
 Of what I suffer here ; if nature need not,
 Or God support nature without repast 250
 Though needing, what praise is it to endure ?
 But now I feel I hunger, which declares
 Nature hath need of what she asks ; yet God
 Can satisfy that need some other way,
 Though hunger still remain : so it remain
 Without this body's wasting, I content me,
 And from the sting of famine fear no harm ;
 Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts, that feed
 Me hungering more to do my Father's will.

It was the hour of night, when thus the Son 260
 Commun'd in silent walk, then laid him down
 Under the hospitable covert nigh
 Of trees thick interwoven ; there he slept,
 And dream'd, as appetite is wont to dream,
 Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet :
 Him thought, he by the brook of Cherith stood,
 And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
 Food to Elijah bringing, even and morn,
 Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought :
 He saw the Prophet also, how he fled 270
 Into the desart, and how there he slept
 Under a juniper : then how, awak'd,
 He found his supper on the coals prepar'd,
 And by the Angel was bid rise and eat,
 And eat the second time after repose,
 The strength whereof suffic'd him forty days :

Sometimes that with Elijah he partook, 277
 Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.
 Thus wore out night ; and now the herald lark
 Left his ground-nest, high towering to descry
 The Morn's approach, and greet her with his song :
 As lightly from his grassy couch up rose
 Our Saviour, and found all was but a dream ;
 Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting wak'd.
 Up to a hill anon his steps he rear'd,
 From whose high top to ken the prospect round,
 If cottage were in view, sheepcote, or herd ;
 But cottage, herd, or sheepcote, none he saw ;
 Only in a bottom saw a pleasant grove,
 With chant of tuneful birds resounding loud ; 290
 Thither he bent his way, determin'd there
 To rest at noon ; and enter'd soon the shade
 High-roof'd, and walks beneath, and alleys brown,
 That open'd in the midst a woody scene ;
 Nature's own work it seem'd, Nature-taught Art,
 And, to a superstitious eye the haunt
 Of wood-gods and wood-nymphs : he view'd it round.
 When suddenly a man before him stood ;
 Not rustick as before, but seemlier clad,
 As one in city, or court, or palace bred, 300
 And with fair speech these words to him address'd.

With granted leave officious I return,
 But much more wonder that the Son of God
 In this wild solitude so long should bide,
 Of all things destitute : and, well I know,
 Not without hunger. Others of some note,
 As story tells, have trod this wilderness ;
 The fugitive bond-woman, with her son
 Outcast Nebaioth,¹ yet found here relief

¹ Hagar was the fugitive slave ; Nebaioth her grandson.

By a providing Angel ; all the race 310
 Of Israel here had famish'd, had not God
 Rain'd from Heaven manna : and that Prophet¹ bold,
 Native of Thebez, wandering here was fed
 Twice by a voice inviting him to eat :
 Of thee these forty days none hath regard,
 Forty and more deserted here indeed.

To whom thus Jesus. What conclud'st thou hence ?
 They all had need ; I, as thou seest, have none.

How hast thou hunger then ? Satan replied.
 Tell me, if food were now before thee set, 320
 Wouldst thou not eat ?—Thereafter as I like
 The giver, answer'd Jesus.—Why should that
 Cause thy refusal ? said the subtle Fiend.
 Hast thou not right to all created things ?
 Owe not all creatures by just right to thee
 Duty and service, nor to stay till bid,
 But tender all their power ? Nor mention I
 Meats by the law unclean, or offer'd first
 To idols, those young Daniel could refuse ;
 Nor proffer'd by an enemy, though who 330
 Would scruple that, with want oppress'd ? Behold,
 Nature asham'd, or, better to express,
 Troubled, that thou shouldst hunger, hath purvey'd
 From all the elements her choicest store,
 To treat thee, as beseems, and as her Lord,
 With honour : only deign to sit and eat.

He spake no dream : for as his words had end,
 Our Saviour lifting up his eyes beheld,
 In ample space under the broadest shade,
 A table richly spread, in regal mode, 340
 With dishes pil'd, and meats of noblest sort
 And savour ; beast of chase, or fowl of game,

¹ ' That Prophet : ' Elijah the Tishbite.

In pastry built, or from the spit, or boil'd, 343
 Gris-amber-steam'd ; all fish, from sea or shore,
 Freshet¹ or purling brook, of shell or fin,
 And exquisitest name, for which was drain'd
 Pontus,² and Lucrine bay,³ and Africk coast.
 (Alas, how simple, to these cates compar'd,
 Was that crude apple that diverted Eve !)
 And at a stately side-board, by the wine 350
 That fragrant smell diffus'd, in order stood
 Tall stripling youths rich clad, of fairer hue
 Than Ganymed⁴ or Hylas ;⁵ distant more
 Under the trees now tripp'd, now solemn stood,
 Nymphs of Diana's train, and Naiades
 With fruits and flowers from Amalthea's⁶ horn,
 And ladies of the Hesperides, that seem'd
 Fairer than feign'd of old or fabled since
 Of faery damsels, met in forest wide
 By knights of Logres, or of Lyonés, 360
 Lancelot,⁷ or Pelleas, or Pellenore.
 And all the while harmonious airs were heard
 Of chiming strings, or charming pipes ; and winds
 Of gentlest gale Arabian odours fann'd
 From their soft wings, and Flora's earliest smells.
 Such was the splendour ; and the Tempter now
 His invitation earnestly renew'd.

What doubts the Son of God to sit and eat ?
 These are not fruits forbidden ; no interdict
 Defends the touching of these viands pure ; 370
 Their taste no knowledge works, at least of evil,
 But life preserves, destroys life's enemy,
 Hunger, with sweet restorative delight.

¹ 'Freshet : ' fresh running stream.—² 'Pontus : ' Euxine Sea.—³ 'Lucrine bay : ' in Italy.—⁴ 'Ganymed : ' a boy beloved of Jupiter.—⁵ 'Hylas : ' a youth loved of Hercules.—⁶ 'Amalthea : ' see Ovid, Fast. 5, 115.—⁷ 'Lancelot,' &c. : characters in the old romance of Morte d'Arthur.

All these are Spirits of air, and woods, and springs, 374
 Thy gentle ministers, who come to pay
 Thee homage, and acknowledge thee their Lord :
 What doubt'st thou, Son of God ? Sit down and eat.

To whom thus Jesus temperately replied :
 Said'st thou not that to all things I had right ?
 And who withholds my power that right to use ? 380
 Shall I receive by gift what of my own,
 When and where likes me best, I can command ?
 I can at will, doubt not, as soon as thou,
 Command a table in this wilderness,
 And call swift flights of Angels ministrant
 Array'd in glory on my cup to attend ;
 Why shouldst thou then obtrude this diligence,
 In vain, where no acceptance it can find ?
 And with my hunger what hast thou to do ?
 Thy pompous delicacies I contemn, 390
 And count thy specious gifts no gifts, but guiles.

To whom thus answer'd Satan malecontent.
 That I have also power to give, thou seest ;
 If of that power I bring thee voluntary
 What I might have bestow'd on whom I pleas'd,
 And rather opportunely in this place
 Chose to impart to thy apparent need,
 Why shouldst thou not accept it ? but I see
 What I can do or offer is suspect ;
 Of these things others quickly will dispose, 400
 Whose pains have earn'd the far-fet¹ spoil. With that
 Both table and provision vanish'd quite
 With sound of harpies' wings and talons heard :
 Only the impórtune Tempter still remain'd,
 And with these words his temptation pursu'd.

By hunger, that each other creature tames,

¹ 'Far-fet : ' far-fetched.

Thou art not to be harm'd, therefore not mov'd ; 407
 Thy temperance, invincible besides,
 For no allurements yields to appetite ;
 And all thy heart is set on high designs,
 High actions : but wherewith to be achiev'd ?
 Great acts require great means of enterprise ;
 Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of birth,
 A carpenter thy father known, thyself
 Bred up in poverty and straits at home,
 Lost in a desert here and hunger-bit :
 Which way, or from what hope, dost thou aspire
 To greatness ? whence authority deriv'st ?
 What followers, what retinue canst thou gain,
 Or at thy heels the dizzy multitude, 420
 Longer than thou canst feed them on thy cost ?
 Money brings honour, friends, conquest, and realms :
 What rais'd Antipater¹ the Edomite,
 And his son Herod plac'd on Judah's throne,
 Thy throne, but gold that got him puissant friends ?
 Therefore, if at great things thou wouldst arrive,
 Get riches first, get wealth, and treasure heap,
 Not difficult, if thou hearken to me :
 Riches are mine, fortune is in my hand ;
 They whom I favour thrive in wealth amain, 430
 While virtue, valour, wisdom, sit in want.

To whom thus Jesus patiently replied.
 Yet wealth, without these three, is impotent
 To gain dominion, or to keep it gain'd.
 Witness those ancient empires of the earth,
 In highth of all their flowing wealth dissolv'd :
 But men endu'd with these have oft attain'd
 In lowest poverty to highest deeds ;
 Gideon, and Jephtha, and the shepherd lad,²

¹ 'Antipater : ' fact—see Josephus.—² 'Shepherd lad : ' David.

Whose offspring on the throne of Judah sat 440
 So many ages, and shall yet regain
 That seat, and reign in Israel without end.
 Among the Heathen (for throughout the world
 To me is not unknown what hath been done
 Worthy of memorial), canst thou not remember
 Quintius,¹ Fabricius, Curius,² Regulus?
 For I esteem those names of men so poor,
 Who could do mighty things, and could contemn
 Riches, though offer'd from the hand of kings.
 And what in me seems wanting, but that I 450
 May also in this poverty as soon
 Accomplish what they did, perhaps and more?
 Extol not riches then, the toil of fools,
 The wise man's cumbrance, if not snare; more apt
 To slacken Virtue, and abate her edge,
 Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise.
 What if with like aversion I reject
 Riches and realms? yet not, for that a crown,
 Golden in show, is but a wreath of thorns,
 Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights, 460
 To him who wears the regal diadem,
 When on his shoulders each man's burden lies;
 For therein stands the office of a king,
 His honour, virtue, merit, and chief praise,
 That for the publick all this weight he bears.
 Yet he, who reigns within himself, and rules
 Passions, desires, and fears, is more a king;
 Which every wise and virtuous man attains;
 And who attains not, ill aspires to rule
 Cities of men, or headstrong multitudes, 470
 Subject himself to anarchy within,
 Or lawless passions in him, which he serves.

¹ 'Quintius:' Cincinnatus.—² 'Curius:' Dentatus.

But to guide nations in the way of truth 473
By saving doctrine, and from error lead
To know, and knowing worship God aright,
Is yet more kingly; this attracts the soul,
Governs the inner man, the nobler part;
That other o'er the body only reigns,
And oft by force, which, to a generous mind,
So reigning, can be no sincere delight. 480
Besides, to give a kingdom hath been thought
Greater and nobler done, and to lay down
Far more magnanimous, than to assume.
Riches are needless then, both for themselves,
And for thy reason why they should be sought,
To gain a scepter, ofttest better miss'd.

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, in a speech of much flattering commendation, endeavours to awaken in Jesus a passion for glory, by particularizing various instances of conquests achieved, and great actions performed, by persons at an early period of life. Our Lord replies, by showing the vanity of worldly fame, and the improper means by which it is generally attained; and contrasts with it the true glory of religious patience and virtuous wisdom, as exemplified in the character of Job. Satan justifies the love of glory from the example of God himself, who requires it from all his creatures. Jesus detects the fallacy of this argument, by showing that, as goodness is the true ground on which glory is due to the great Creator of all things, sinful Man can have no right whatever to it.—Satan then urges our Lord respecting his claim to the throne of David; he tells him that the kingdom of Judea, being at that time a province of Rome, cannot be got possession of without much personal exertion on his part, and presses him to lose no time in beginning to reign. Jesus refers him to the time allotted for this, as for all other things; and, after intimating somewhat respecting his own previous sufferings, asks Satan, why he should be so solicitous for the exaltation of one, whose rising was destined to be his fall. Satan replies, that his own desperate state, by excluding all hope, leaves little room for fear; and that, as his own punishment was equally doomed, he is not interested in preventing the reign of one, from whose apparent benevolence he might rather hope for some interference in his favour.—Satan still pursues his former incitements; and, supposing that the seeming reluctance of Jesus to be thus advanced might arise from his being unacquainted with the world and its glories, conveys him to the summit of a high mountain, and from thence shows him most of the kingdoms of Asia, particularly pointing out to his notice some extraordinary military preparations of the Parthians to resist the incursions of the Scythians. He then informs our Lord, that he showed him this purposely, that he might see how necessary military exertions are to retain the possession of kingdoms, as well as to subdue them at first; and advises him to consider how impossible it was to maintain Judea against two such powerful neighbours as the Romans and Parthians, and how necessary it would be to form an alliance with one or other of them. At the same time he recommends, and engages to secure to him, that of the Parthians; and tells him that by this means his power will be defended from any thing that Rome or Cæsar might attempt against it, and that he will be able to extend his glory wide, and especially to accomplish, what was particularly necessary to make the throne of Judea really the throne of David, the deliverance and restoration of the

ten tribes, still in a state of captivity. Jesus having briefly noticed the vanity of military efforts, and the weakness of the arm of flesh, says that when the time comes for ascending his allotted throne, he shall not be slack: he remarks on Satan's extraordinary zeal for the deliverance of the Israelites, to whom he had always showed himself an enemy, and declares their servitude to be the consequence of their idolatry; but adds, that at a future time it may perhaps please God to recall them, and restore them to their liberty and native land.

So spake the Son of God; and Satan stood
Awhile, as mute, confounded what to say,
What to reply, confuted, and convinc'd
Of his weak arguing and fallacious drift;
At length, collecting all his serpent wiles,
With soothing words renew'd, him thus accosts.

I see thou know'st what is of use to know,
What best to say canst say, to do canst do;
Thy actions to thy words accord; thy words
To thy large heart give utterance due; thy heart 10
Contains of good, wise, just, the perfect shape.
Should kings and nations from thy mouth consult,
Thy counsel would be as the oracle
Urim and Thummim, those oraculous gems
On Aaron's breast; or tongue of seers old
Infallible: Or wert thou sought to deeds
That might require the array of war, thy skill
Of conduct would be such, that all the world
Could not sustain thy prowess, or subsist
In battle, though against thy few in arms. 20
These Godlike virtues wherefore dost thou hide,
Affecting private life, or more obscure
In savage wilderness? Wherefore deprive
All Earth her wonder at thy acts, thyself
The fame and glory; glory, the reward
That sole excites to high attempts, the flame
Of most erected spirits, most temper'd pure
Ethereal, who all pleasures else despise,

All treasures and all gain esteem as dross, 29
 And dignities and powers all but the highest ?
 Thy years are ripe, and over-ripe ; the son
 Of Macedonian Philip had ere these
 Won Asia, and the throne of Cyrus held
 At his dispose ; young Scipio had brought down
 The Carthaginian pride ; young Pompey quell'd
 The Pontick king, and in triúmph had rode.
 Yet years, and to ripe years judgment mature,
 Quench not the thirst of glory, but augment.
 Great Julius, whom now all the world admires,
 The more he grew in years, the more inflam'd 40
 With glory, wept¹ that he had liv'd so long
 Inglorious : But thou yet art not too late.

To whom our Saviour calmly thus replied :
 Thou neither dost persuade me to seek wealth
 For empire's sake, nor empire to affect
 For glory's sake, by all thy argument.
 For what is glory but the blaze of fame,
 The people's praise, if always praise unmix'd ?
 And what the people but a herd confus'd,
 A miscellaneous rabble who extol 50
 Things vulgar, and, well weigh'd, scarce worth the praise ?
 They praise, and they admire, they know not what,
 And know not whom, but as one leads the other ;
 And what delight to be by such extoll'd,
 To live upon their tongues, and be their talk,
 Of whom to be disprais'd were no small praise ?
 His lot who dares be singularly good.
 The intelligent among them and the wise
 Are few, and glory scarce of few is rais'd.
 This is true glory and renown, when God 60
 Looking on the earth, with approbation marks

¹ ' Wept : ' at the tomb of Alexander.

The just man, and divulges him through Heaven 62
To all his Angels, who with true applause
Recount his praises: thus he did to Job,
When, to extend his fame through Heaven and Earth,
As thou to thy reproach may'st well remember,
He ask'd thee, "Hast thou seen my servant Job?"
Famous he was in Heaven, on Earth less known;
Where glory is false glory, attributed
To things not glorious, men not worthy of fame. 70
They err, who count it glorious to subdue
By conquest far and wide, to over-run
Large countries, and in field great battles win,
Great cities by assault: What do these worthies,
But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter, and enslave
Peaceable nations, neighbouring, or remote,
Made captive, yet deserving freedom more
Than those their conquerours, who leave behind
Nothing but ruin wheresoe'er they rove,
And all the flourishing works of peace destroy; 80
Then swell with pride, and must be titled gods,
Great benefactors of mankind, deliverers,
Worshipp'd with temple, priest, and sacrifice?
One¹ is the Son of Jove, of Mars the other;²
Till conquerour Death discover them scarce men,
Rolling in brutish vices, and deform'd,
Violent or shameful death their due reward.
But if there be in glory aught of good,
It may by means far different be attain'd,
Without ambition, war, or violence; 90
By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,
By patience, temperance: I mention still
Him, whom thy wrongs, with saintly patience borne,
Made famous in a land and times obscure;

¹ 'One:' Alexander.—² 'The other:' Romulus.

Who names not now with honour patient Job ? 95
 Poor Socrates, (who next more memorable ?)
 By what he taught, and suffer'd for so doing,
 For truth's sake suffering death, unjust, lives now
 Equal in fame to proudest conquerours.
 Yet if for fame and glory aught be done, 100
 Aught suffer'd ; if young African¹ for fame
 His wasted country freed from Punick rage ;
 The deed becomes unprais'd, the man at least,
 And loses, though but verbal, his reward.
 Shall I seek glory then, as vain men seek,
 Oft not deserv'd ? I seek not mine, but his
 Who sent me ; and thereby witness whence I am.

To whom the Tempter murmuring thus replied.
 Think not so slight of glory ; therein least
 Resembling thy Great Father : He seeks glory, 110
 And for his glory all things made, all things
 Orders and governs ; not content in Heaven
 By all his Angels glorified, requires
 Glory from men, from all men, good or bad,
 Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption ;
 Above all sacrifice or hallow'd gift,
 Glory he requires, and glory he receives,
 Promiscuous from all nations, Jew or Greek,
 Or barbarous, nor exception hath declar'd ;
 From us, his foes pronounc'd, glory he exacts. 120

To whom our Saviour fervently replied.
 And reason ; since his Word all things produc'd,
 Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,
 But to show forth his goodness, and impart
 His good communicable to every soul
 Freely ; of whom what could he less expect
 Than glory and benediction, that is, thanks,

¹ ' Young African : ' the first Scipio Africanus.

The slightest, easiest, readiest recompense 128
From them who could return him nothing else,
And, not returning that, would likeliest render
Contempt instead, dishonour, obloquy ?
Hard recompense, unsuitable return
For so much good, so much beneficence !
But why should man seek glory, who of his own
Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs,
But condemnation, ignominy, and shame ?
Who, for so many benefits receiv'd,
Turn'd recreant to God, ingrate and false,
And so of all true good himself despoil'd ;
Yet, sacrilegious, to himself would take 140
That which to God alone of right belongs :
Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace,
That who advance his glory not their own,
Them he himself to glory will advance.

So spake the Son of God ; and here again
Satan had not to answer, but stood struck
With guilt of his own sin ; for he himself,
Insatiable of glory, had lost all ;
Yet of another plea bethought him soon.

Of glory, as thou wilt, said he, so deem : 150
Worth or not worth the seeking, let it pass.
But to a kingdom thou art born, ordain'd
To sit upon thy father David's throne,
By mother's side thy father ; though thy right
Be now in powerful hands, that will not part
Easily from possession won with arms :
Judæa now and all the Promis'd Land,
Reduc'd a province under Roman yoke,
Obeys Tiberius ; nor is always rul'd
With temperate sway ; oft have they violated 160
The temple, oft the law, with foul affronts,

Abominations rather, as did once 162
 Antiochus: And think'st thou to regain
 Thy right, by sitting still, or thus retiring?
 So did not Maccabeus: he indeed
 Retir'd unto the desert, but with arms;
 And o'er a mighty king so oft prevail'd,
 That by strong hand his family obtain'd,
 Though priests, the crown, and David's throne usurp'd
 With Modin¹ and her suburbs once content. 170
 If kingdom move thee not, let move thee zeal
 And duty; zeal and duty are not slow,
 But on occasion's forelock watchful wait:
 They themselves rather are occasion best;
 Zeal of thy father's house, duty to free
 Thy country from her Heathen servitude.
 So shalt thou best fulfil, best verify
 The Prophets old, who sung thy endless reign;
 The happier reign, the sooner it begins:
 Reign then; what canst thou better do the while? 180
 To whom our Saviour answer thus return'd.
 All things are best fulfill'd in their due time;
 And time there is for all things, Truth hath said.
 If of my reign Prophetick Writ hath told,
 That it shall never end, so, when begin,
 The Father in his purpose hath decreed;
 He, in whose hand all times and seasons roll.
 What if he hath decreed that I shall first
 Be tried in humble state, and things adverse,
 By tribulations, injuries, insults, 190
 Contempts, and scorns, and snares, and violence,
 Suffering, abstaining, quietly expecting,
 Without distrust or doubt, that he may know
 What I can suffer, how obey? Who best

¹ 'Modin:' an obscure part of Judea.

Can suffer, best can do; best reign, who first 195
Well hath obey'd; just trial, ere I merit
My exaltation without change or end.
But what concerns it thee, when I begin
My everlasting kingdom? Why art thou
Solicitous? What moves thy inquisition? 200
Know'st thou not that my rising is thy fall,
And my promotion will be thy destruction?
To whom the Tempter, inly rack'd, replied.
Let that come when it comes; all hope is lost
Of my reception into grace: what worse?
For where no hope is left, is left no fear:
If there be worse, the expectation more
Of worse torments me than the feeling can.
I would be at the worst; worst is my port,
My harbour, and my ultimate repose: 210
The end I would attain, my final good.
My error was my error, and my crime
My crime; whatever, for itself condemn'd;
And will alike be punish'd, whether thou
Reign, or reign not; though to that gentle brow
Willingly could I fly, and hope thy reign,
From that placid aspect and meek regard,
Rather than aggravate my evil state,
Would stand between me and thy Father's ire,
(Whose ire I dread more than the fire of hell), 220
A shelter, and a kind of shading cool
Interposition, as a summer's cloud.
If I then to the worst that can be haste,
Why move thy feet so slow to what is best,
Happiest, both to thyself and all the world,
That thou, who worthiest art, shouldst be their king?
Perhaps thou linger'st, in deep thoughts detain'd
Of the enterprise so hazardous and high;

No wonder; for, though in thee be united 229
 What of perfection can in man be found,
 Or human nature can receive, consider,
 Thy life hath yet been private, most part spent
 At home, scarce view'd the Galilean towns,
 And once a year Jerusalem, few days'
 Short sojourn; and what thence couldst thou observe?
 The world thou hast not seen, much less her glory,
 Empires, and monarchs, and their radiant courts,
 Best school of best experience, quickest insight
 In all things that to greatest actions lead.
 The wisest, unexperienc'd, will be ever 240
 Timorous and loth, with novice modesty
 (As he¹ who, seeking asses, found a kingdom),
 Irresolute, unhardy, unadventurous :
 But I will bring thee where thou soon shalt quit
 Those rudiments, and see before thine eyes
 The monarchies of the earth, their pomp and state ;
 Sufficient introduction to inform
 Thee, of thyself so apt, in regal arts,
 And regal mysteries; that thou may'st know
 How best their opposition to withstand. 250

With that, (such power was given him then,) he took
 The Son of God up to a mountain² high.
 It was a mountain at whose verdant feet
 A spacious plain, outstretch'd in circuit wide,
 Lay pleasant; from his side two rivers³ flow'd,
 The one winding, the other straight, and left between
 Fair champain with less rivers intervein'd,
 Then meeting join'd their tribute to the sea :
 Fertile of corn the glebe, of oil, and wine ;
 With herds the pastures throng'd, with flocks the hills ;

¹ 'He : ' Saul.—² 'A mountain : ' Niphates ; see 8th book of Paradise Lost.—
³ 'Two rivers : ' Tigris and Euphrates.

Huge cities and high-tower'd, that well might seem 261
 The seats of mightiest monarchs ; and so large
 The prospect was, that here and there was room
 For barren desart, fountainless and dry.
 To this high mountain top the Tempter brought
 Our Saviour, and new train of words began.

Well have we speeded, and o'er hill and dale,
 Forest, and field, and flood, temples and towers,
 Cut shorter many a league : here thou behold'st
 Assyria, and her empire's ancient bounds, 270
 Araxes and the Caspian lake ; thence on
 As far as Indus east, Euphrates west,
 And oft beyond : to south the Persian bay,
 And, inaccessible, the Arabian drouth :¹
 Here Nineveh, of length within her wall
 Several days' journey, built by Ninus old,
 Of that first golden monarchy the seat,
 And seat of Salmanassar,² whose success
 Israel in long captivity still mourns ;
 There Babylon, the wonder of all tongues, 280
 As ancient, but rebuilt by him who twice
 Judah and all thy father David's house
 Led captive, and Jerusalem laid waste,
 Till Cyrus set them free ; Persepolis,
 His city, there thou seest, and Bactra³ there ;
 Ecbatana her structure vast there shows,
 And Hecatompylos her hundred gates ;
 There Susa by Choaspes,⁴ amber stream,
 The drink of none but kings ; of later fame,
 Built by Emathian⁵ or by Parthian hands, 290
 The great Seleucia,⁶ Nisibis, and there

¹ 'Drouth : ' *i. e.*, desert.—² 'Salmanassar : ' who took captive the ten tribes.
 —³ 'Persepolis,' 'Bactra : ' chief cities in Persia.—⁴ 'Choaspes : ' or Ulai, the
 waters of which were sacred to the use of kings.—⁵ 'Emathian : ' *i. e.*, Mace-
 donian.—⁶ 'Seleucia,' &c. : cities on Tigris.

Artaxata, Teredon, Ctesiphon, 292
 Turning with easy eye, thou may'st behold.
 All these the Parthian (now some ages past,
 By great Arsaces led, who founded first
 That empire), under his dominion holds,
 From the luxurious kings¹ of Antioch won.
 And just in time thou com'st to have a view
 Of his great power ; for now the Parthian king
 In Ctesiphon hath gather'd all his host 300
 Against the Scythian, whose incursions wild
 Have wasted Sogdiana ; to her aid
 He marches now in haste ; see, though from far,
 His thousands, in what martial equipage
 They issue forth, steel bows and shafts their arms,
 Of equal dread in flight, or in pursuit ;
 All horsemen, in which fight they most excel ;
 See how in warlike muster they appear,
 In rhombs,² and wedges, and half-moons, and wings.
 He look'd, and saw what numbers numberless 310
 The city gates out-pour'd, light-armed troops,
 In coats of mail and military pride ;
 In mail their horses clad, yet fleet and strong,
 Prauncing their riders bore, the flower and choice
 Of many provinces from bound to bound ;
 From Arachosia,³ from Candaor east,
 And Margiana to the Hyrcanian cliffs
 Of Caucasus, and dark Iberian dales ;
 From Atropatia and the neighbouring plains
 Of Adiabene, Media, and the south 320
 Of Susiana, to Balsara's⁴ haven.
 He saw them in their forms of battle rang'd,
 How quick they wheel'd, and flying behind him shot

¹ 'Luxurious kings : ' the Antiochi.—² 'Rhomb : ' a phalanx with four equal sides.—³ 'Arachosia,' &c. : all provinces in Parthia.—⁴ 'Balsara : ' Basra.

Sharp sleet of arrowy showers against the face 324
 Of their pursuers, and overcame by flight ;
 The field all iron cast a gleaming brown :
 Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor on each horn
 Cuirassiers all in steel for standing fight,
 Chariots, or elephants indors'd with towers
 Of archers ; nor of labouring pioneers 330
 A multitude, with spades and axes arm'd
 To lay hills plain, fell woods, or valleys fill,
 Or where plain was raise hill, or overlay
 With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke ;
 Mules after these, camels and dromedaries,
 And waggons fraught with utensils of war.
 Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,
 When Agrican¹ with all his northern powers
 Besieg'd Albracca, as romances tell,
 The city of Gallaphrone, from whence to win 340
 The fairest of her sex Angelica,
 His daughter, sought by many prowest knights,
 Both Paynim, and the peers of Charlemain.
 Such and so numerous was their chivalry :
 At sight whereof the Fiend yet more presum'd,
 And to our Saviour thus his words renew'd.

That thou may'st know I seek not to engage
 Thy virtue, and not every way secure
 On no slight grounds thy safety ; hear, and mark,
 To what end I have brought thee hither, and shown 350
 All this fair sight : Thy kingdom, though foretold
 By Prophet or by Angel, unless thou
 Endeavour, as thy father David did,
 Thou never shalt obtain ; prediction still
 In all things, and all men, supposes means ;

¹ 'Agrican,' &c. : fabled heroes of romance ; see Boiardo's 'Orlando Innamorato.'

Without means us'd, what it predicts revokes. 356
 But say thou wert possess'd of David's throne,
 By free consent of all, none opposite,
 Samaritan or Jew, how could'st thou hope
 Long to enjoy it, quiet and secure,
 Between two such enclosing enemies,
 Roman and Parthian? Therefore one of these
 Thou must make sure thy own; the Parthian first
 By my advice, as nearer, and of late
 Found able by invasion to annoy
 Thy country, and captive lead away her kings,
 Antigonus¹ and old Hyrcanus, bound,
 Maugre the Roman: It shall be my task
 To render thee the Parthian at dispose,
 Choose which thou wilt, by conquest or by league: 370
 By him thou shalt regain, without him not,
 That which alone can truly re-install thee
 In David's royal seat, his true successour,
 Deliverance of thy brethren, those ten tribes,
 Whose offspring in his territory yet serve,
 In Habor,² and among the Medes dispers'd:
 Ten sons of Jacob, two of Joseph, lost
 Thus long from Israel, serving, as of old
 Their fathers in the land of Egypt serv'd.
 This offer sets before thee to deliver. 380
 These if from servitude thou shalt restore
 To their inheritance, then, nor till then,
 Thou on the throne of David in full glory,
 From Egypt to Euphrates, and beyond,
 Shalt reign, and Rome or Cæsar not need fear.

To whom our Saviour answer'd thus, unmov'd.
 Much ostentation vain of fleshly arm
 And fragile arms, much instrument of war,

¹ 'Antigonus,' &c.: see Josephus.—² 'Habor:' see 2 Kings xviii. 11.

Long in preparing, soon to nothing brought,
Before mine eyes thou hast set; and in my ear
Vented much policy, and projects deep
Of enemies, of aids, battles and leagues,
Plausible to the world, to me worth nought.
Means I must use, thou say'st; prediction else
Will unpredict, and fail me of the throne :
My time I told thee (and that time for thee
Were better farthest off), is not yet come :
When that comes, think not thou to find me slack
On my part aught endeavouring, or to need
Thy politic maxims, or that cumbersome
Luggage of war there shown me, argument
Of human weakness rather than of strength.
My brethren, as thou call'st them, those ten tribes
I must deliver, if I mean to reign
David's true heir, and his full scepter sway
To just extent over all Israel's sons.
But whence to thee this zeal ? Where was it then
For Israel, or for David, or his throne,
When thou stood'st up his tempter to the pride
Of numbering Israël, which cost the lives
Of threescore and ten thousand Israelites
By three days' pestilence ? Such was thy zeal
To Israel then ; the same that now to me !
As for those captive tribes, themselves were they
Who wrought their own captivity, fell off
From God to worship calves, the deities
Of Egypt, Baal next and Ashtaroath,
And all the idolatries of Heathen round,
Besides their other worse than heathenish crimes ;
Nor in the land of their captivity
Humbled themselves, or penitent besought
The God of their forefathers ; but so died

389

400

410

420

Impenitent, and left a race behind 423
 Like to themselves, distinguishable scarce
 From Gentiles, but by circumcision vain;
 And God with idols in their worship join'd.
 Should I of these the liberty regard,
 Who, freed, as to their ancient patrimony,
 Unhumbled, unrepentant, unreform'd,
 Headlong would follow; and to their Gods perhaps 430
 Of Bethel and of Dan? No; let them serve
 Their enemies, who serve idols with God.
 Yet he at length (time to himself best known),
 Remembering Abraham, by some wondrous call
 May bring them back, repentant and sincere,
 And at their passing cleave the Assyrian flood,¹
 While to their native land with joy they haste;
 As the Red Sea and Jordan once he cleft,
 When to the Promis'd Land their fathers pass'd:
 To his due time and providence I leave them. 440

So spake Israel's true King, and to the Fiend
 Made answer meet, that made void all his wiles.
 So fares it, when with truth falsehood contends.

¹ 'Assyrian flood' i. e., Euphrates. See Rev. xvi. 12.

BOOK IV.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, persisting in the temptation of our Lord, shows him Imperial Rome in its greatest pomp and splendour, as a power which he probably would prefer before that of the Parthians; and tells him that he might with the greatest ease expel Tiberius, restore the Romans to their liberty, and make himself master not only of the Roman Empire, but, by so doing, of the whole world, and inclusively of the throne of David. Our Lord, in reply, expresses his contempt of grandeur and worldly power; notices the luxury, vanity, and profligacy of the Romans, declaring how little they merited to be restored to that liberty, which they had lost by their misconduct, and briefly refers to the greatness of his own future kingdom. Satan, now desperate, to enhance the value of his proffered gifts, professes that the only terms on which he will bestow them, are our Saviour's falling down and worshipping him. Our Lord expresses a firm but temperate indignation at such a proposition, and rebukes the Tempter by the title of "Satan for ever damned." Satan, abashed, attempts to justify himself: he then assumes a new ground of temptation, and, proposing to Jesus the intellectual gratifications of wisdom and knowledge, points out to him the celebrated seat of ancient learning, Athens, its schools, and other various resorts of learned teachers and their disciples; accompanying the view with a highly-finished panegyric on the Grecian musicians, poets, orators, and philosophers of the different sects. Jesus replies, by showing the vanity and insufficiency of the boasted Heathen philosophy, and prefers to the music, poetry, eloquence, and didactic policy of the Greeks, those of the inspired Hebrew writers. Satan, irritated at the failure of all his attempts, upbraids the indiscretion of our Saviour in rejecting his offers; and, having, in ridicule of his expected kingdom, foretold the sufferings that our Lord was to undergo, carries him back into the wilderness, and leaves him there. Night comes on: Satan raises a tremendous storm, and attempts farther to alarm Jesus with frightful dreams, and terrific threatening spectres; which, however, have no effect upon him. A calm, bright, beautiful morning succeeds to the horrors of the night. Satan again presents himself to our blessed Lord, and, from noticing the storm of the preceding night as pointed chiefly at him, takes occasion once more to insult him with an account of the sufferings which he was certainly to undergo. This only draws from our Lord a brief rebuke. Satan, now at the height of his desperation, confesses that he had frequently watched Jesus from his birth, purposely to discover if he was the true Messiah; and, collecting from what passed at the river Jordan that he most probably was so, he had from that time more assiduously followed him, in hopes of gaining

some advantage over him, which would most effectually prove that he was not really that Divine Person destined to be his "fatal Enemy." In this he acknowledges that he has hitherto completely failed; but still determines to make one more trial of him. Accordingly he conveys him to the Temple at Jerusalem, and, placing him on a pointed eminence, requires him to prove his Divinity either by standing there, or casting himself down with safety. Our Lord reproves the Tempter, and at the same time manifests his own Divinity by standing on this dangerous point. Satan, amazed and terrified, instantly falls; and repairs to his Infernal Compeers, to relate the bad success of his enterprise. Angels in the meantime convey our blessed Lord to a beautiful valley; and, while they minister to him a repast of celestial food, celebrate his victory in a triumphant hymn.

PERPLEX'D and troubled at his bad success
 The Tempter stood, nor had what to reply,
 Discover'd in his fraud, thrown from his hope
 So oft, and the persuasive rhetorick
 That sleek'd his tongue, and won so much on Eve,
 So little here, nay lost; but Eve was Eve;
 This far his over-match, who, self-deceiv'd
 And rash, before-hand had no better weigh'd
 The strength he was to cope with, or his own:
 But as a man, who had been matchless held 10
 In cunning, over-reach'd where least he thought,
 To salve his credit, and for very spite,
 Still will be tempting him who foils him still,
 And never cease, though to his shame the more;
 Or as a swarm of flies in vintage time,
 About the wine-press where sweet must is pour'd,
 Beat off, returns as oft with humming sound;
 Or surging waves against a solid rock,
 Though all to shivers dash'd, the assault renew,
 (Vain battery!) and in froth or bubbles end; 20
 So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse
 Met ever, and to shameful silence brought,
 Yet gives not o'er, though desperate of success,
 And his vain importunity pursues.

He brought our Saviour to the western side 25
Of that high mountain, whence he might behold
Another plain,¹ long, but in breadth not wide,
Wash'd by the southern sea, and, on the north,
To equal length back'd with a ridge of hills²
That screen'd the fruits of the earth, and seats of men,
From cold Septentrion blasts; thence in the midst 31
Divided by a river, of whose banks
On each side an imperial city stood,
With towers and temples proudly elevate
On seven small hills, with palaces adorn'd,
Porches, and theatres, baths, aqueducts,
Statues, and trophies, and triumphal arcs,
Gardens, and groves, presented to his eyes,
Above the highth of mountains interpos'd
(By what strange parallax, or optick skill 40
Of vision, multiplied through air, or glass
Of telescope, were curious to inquire):
And now the Tempter thus his silence broke:
The city, which thou seest, no other deem
Than great and glorious Rome, queen of the earth,
So far renown'd, and with the spoils enrich'd
Of nations; there the Capitol thou seest,
Above the rest lifting his stately head
On the Tarpeian rock, her citadel
Impregnable; and there mount Palatine, 50
The imperial palace, compass huge, and high
The structure, skill of noblest architects,
With gilded battlements conspicuous far,
Turrets, and terraces, and glittering spires:
Many a fair edifice besides, more like
Houses of gods (so well I have dispos'd
My aery microscope), thou may'st behold,

¹ 'Plain:' Italy.—² 'Hills:' Apennines.

Outside and inside both, pillars and roofs, 58
 Carv'd work, the hand of fam'd artificers,
 In cedar, marble, ivory, or gold.
 Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see
 What conflux issuing forth, or entering in ;
 Prætors, proconsuls to their provinces
 Hasting, or on return, in robes of state,
 Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power,
 Legions and cohorts, turms¹ of horse and wings :
 Or embassies from regions far remote,
 In various habits, on the Appian² road,
 Or on the Emilian ;³ some from farthest south,
 Syene,⁴ and where the shadow both way falls, 70
 Meroe,⁵ Nilotick isle ; and, more to west,
 The realm of Bocchus⁶ to the Black-moor sea ;
 From the Asian kings, and Parthian among these ;
 From India, and the golden Chersonese,⁷
 And utmost Indian isle Taprobane,
 Dusk faces with white silken turbans wreath'd ;
 From Gallia, Gades,⁸ and the British west ;
 Germans, and Scythians, and Sarmatians, north
 Beyond Danubius to the Taurick pool.⁹
 All nations now to Rome obedience pay ; 80
 To Rome's great emperour, whose wide domain,
 In ample territory, wealth, and power,
 Civility of manners, arts, and arms,
 And long renown, thou justly may'st prefer
 Before the Parthian. These two thrones except,
 The rest are barbarous, and scarce worth the sight,
 Shar'd among petty kings too far remov'd ;
 These having shown thee, I have shown thee all

¹ 'Turms : ' troops ; from the Latin, *turmæ*.—² 'Appian : ' leading south.—
³ 'Emilian : ' north.—⁴ 'Syene : ' a city in Egypt.—⁵ 'Meroe : ' an isle in
 Ethiopia.—⁶ 'Bocchus : ' Mauritania.—⁷ 'Chersonese : ' the most southern pro-
 montory of India.—⁸ 'Gades : ' Cadiz.—⁹ 'Taurick pool : ' *Palus Maeotis*.

The kingdoms of the world, and all their glory. 89
 This emperour¹ hath no son, and is now old,
 Old and lascivious, and from Rome retir'd
 To Capreæ, an island small, but strong,
 On the Campanian shore, with purpose there
 His horrid lusts in private to enjoy;
 Committing to a wicked favourite²
 All publick cares, and yet of him suspicious;
 Hated of all, and hating. With what ease,
 Endu'd with regal virtues, as thou art,
 Appearing, and beginning noble deeds,
 Might'st thou expel this monster from his throne, 100
 Now made a stye; and in his place ascending,
 A victor people free from servile yoke!
 And with my help thou may'st; to me the power
 Is given, and by that right I give it thee.
 Aim therefore at no less than all the world;
 Aim at the highest: without the highest attain'd,
 Will be for thee no sitting, or not long,
 On David's throne, be prophesied what will.

To whom the Son of God, unmov'd, replied.
 Nor doth this grandeur and majestic show 110
 Of luxury, though call'd magnificence,
 More than of arms before, allure mine eye,
 Much less my mind; though thou shouldst add to tell
 Their sumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feasts
 On citron tables or Atlantick stone³
 (For I have also heard, perhaps have read),
 Their wines of Setia,⁴ Cales, and Falerne,
 Chios, and Crete, and how they quaff in gold,
 Crystal, and myrrhine cups, emboss'd with gems

¹ 'Emperour:' Tiberius. — ² 'Favourite:' Sejanus. — ³ 'Atlantick stone: citron grown on Mount Atlas, and resembling marble, used in Rome for tables. — ⁴ 'Setia,' &c.: Campanian wines.

And studs of pearl; to me shouldst tell, who thirst 120
And hunger still. Then embassies thou show'st
From nations far and nigh: what honour that,
But tedious waste of time, to sit and hear
So many hollow compliments and lies,
Outlandish flatteries? Then proceed'st to talk
Of the emperour, how easily subdu'd,
How gloriously: I shall, thou say'st, expel
A brutish monster; what if I withal
Expel a Devil who first made him such?
Let his tormenter conscience find him out; 130
For him I was not sent; nor yet to free
That people, victor once, now vile and base;
Deservedly made vassal; who, once just,
Frugal, and mild, and temperate, conquer'd well,
But govern ill the nations under yoke,
Peeling their provinces, exhausted all
By lust and rapine; first ambitious grown
Of triumph, that insulting vanity;
Then cruel, by their sports to blood inur'd
Of fighting beasts, and men to beasts expos'd; 140
Luxurious by their wealth, and greedier still,
And from the daily scene effeminate.
What wise and valiant man would seek to free
These, thus degenerate, by themselves enslav'd?
Or could of inward slaves make outward free?
Know therefore, when my season comes to sit
On David's throne, it shall be like a tree
Spreading and overshadowing all the earth;
Or as a stone, that shall to pieces dash
All monarchies besides throughout the world; 150
And of my kingdom there shall be no end:
Means there shall be to this; but what the means,
Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell.

To whom the Tempter, impudent, replied. 154
I see all offers made by me how slight
Thou valuest, because offer'd, and reject'st:
Nothing will please the difficult and nice,
Or nothing more than still to contradict:
On the other side know also thou, that I
On what I offer set as high esteem, 160
Nor what I part with mean to give for naught:
All these, which in a moment thou behold'st,
The kingdoms of the world, to thee I give
(For, given to me, I give to whom I please),
No trifle; yet with this reserve, not else,
On this condition, if thou wilt fall down,
And worship me as thy superiour lord
(Easily done), and hold them all of me;
For what can less so great a gift deserve?

Whom thus our Saviour answer'd with disdain. 170
I never lik'd thy talk, thy offers less;
Now both abhor, since thou hast dar'd to utter
The abominable terms, impious condition:
But I endure the time, till which expir'd
Thou hast permission on me. It is written,
The first of all commandments, Thou shalt worship
The Lord thy God, and only Him shalt serve;
And dar'st thou to the Son of God propound
To worship thee accurs'd? now more accurs'd
For this attempt, bolder than that on Eve, 180
And more blasphemous; which expect to rue.
The kingdoms of the world to thee were given?
Permitted rather, and by thee usurp'd:
Other donation none thou canst produce.
If given, by whom but by the King of kings,
God over all supreme? If given to thee,
By thee how fairly is the Giver now

Repaid ! but gratitude in thee is lost 188
 Long since. Wert thou so void of fear or shame
 As offer them to me, the Son of God ?
 To me my own, on such abhorred pact,
 That I fall down and worship thee as God ?
 Get thee behind me : plain thou now appear'st
 That Evil-one, Satan for ever damn'd.

To whom the Fiend, with fear abash'd, replied.
 Be not so sore offended, Son of God,
 Though Sons of God both Angels are and Men,
 If I, to try whether in higher sort
 Than these thou bear'st that title, have propos'd
 What both from Men and Angels I receive, 200
 Tetrarchs of fire, air, flood, and on the earth,
 Nations beside from all the quarter'd winds,
 God of this world invok'd, and world beneath :
 Who then thou art, whose coming is foretold
 To me most fatal, me it most concerns ;
 The trial hath indamag'd thee no way,
 Rather more honour left and more esteem ;
 Me nought advantag'd, missing what I aim'd.
 Therefore let pass, as they are transitory,
 The kingdoms of this world ; I shall no more 210
 Advise thee ; gain them as thou canst, or not.
 And thou thyself seem'st otherwise inclin'd
 Than to a worldly crown ; addicted more
 To contemplation and profound dispute,
 As by that early action may be judg'd,
 When, slipping from thy mother's eye, thou went'st
 Alone into the temple, there wast found
 Among the gravest Rabbies, disputant
 On points and questions fitting Moses' chair, 219
 Teaching, not taught. The childhood shows the man,
 As morning shows the day ; be famous then

By wisdom ; as thy empire must extend, 222
 So let extend thy mind o'er all the world
 In knowledge, all things in it comprehend.
 All knowledge is not couch'd in Moses' law,
 The Pentateuch, or what the prophets wrote ;
 The Gentiles also know, and write, and teach
 To admiration, led by Nature's light,
 And with the Gentiles much thou must converse,
 Ruling them by persuasion, as thou mean'st ; 230
 Without their learning, how wilt thou with them,
 Or they with thee, hold conversation meet ?
 How wilt thou reason with them, how refute
 Their idolisms,¹ traditions, paradoxes ?
 Errour by his own arms is best evinc'd.
 Look once more, ere we leave this specular mount,
 Westward, much nearer by south-west, behold ;
 Where on the Ægean shore a city stands,
 Built nobly, pure the air, and light the soil ;
 Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts 240
 And eloquence, native to famous wits
 Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,
 City or suburban, studious walks and shades.
 See there the olive grove of Academe,
 Plato's retirement, where the Attick bird²
 Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long ;
 There flowery hill Hymettus, with the sound
 Of bees' industrious murmur, oft invites
 To studious musing ; there Ilissus rolls 249
 His whispering stream : within the walls, then view
 The schools of ancient sages ; his,³ who bred

¹ 'Idolisms ;' a term probably suggested by, and equivalent to, Bacon's 'Idola.'—² 'Attick bird : ' the nightingale, called so because Philomela, fabled to have been turned into a nightingale, was the daughter of a king of Athens.—³ 'His,' &c. : i. e., Aristotle. His school was the Lyceum, and Stoa was Zeno's.

Great Alexander to subdue the world, 252
 Lyceum there, and painted Stoa next :
 There shalt thou hear and learn the secret power
 Of harmony, in tones and numbers hit
 By voice or hand ; and various measur'd verse,
 Æolian¹ charms and Dorian² lyrick odes,
 And his who gave them breath, but higher sung,
 Blind Melesigenes, thence Homer call'd,
 Whose poem Phœbus challeng'd for his own : 260
 Thence what the lofty grave tragedians taught
 In Chorus or Iambick, teachers best ³
 Of moral prudence, with delight receiv'd
 In brief sententious precepts, while they treat
 Of fate, and chance, and change in human life,
 High actions and high passions best describing :
 Thence to the famous orators repair,
 Those ancient,⁴ whose resistless eloquence
 Wiielded at will that fierce democratie,
 Shook the arsenal,⁵ and fulmin'd over Greece 270
 To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne :
 To sage Philosophy next lend thine ear,
 From heaven descended to the low-roof'd house
 Of Socrates ; see there his tenement,
 Whom well inspir'd the oracle pronounc'd
 Wisest of men ; from whose mouth issu'd forth
 Mellifluous streams, that water'd all the schools
 Of Academicks⁶ old and new, with those
 Surnamed Peripatetics, and the sect
 Epicurean, and the Stoick severe ; 280
 These here revolve, or, as thou lik'st, at home,

¹ ' Æolian : ' those of Alcaeus and Sappho. — ² ' Dorian : ' those of Pindar. —
³ ' Teachers best : ' referring principally to Euripides. — ⁴ ' Those ancient : ' Pericles and Demosthenes. — ⁵ ' Arsenal : ' magazine of defensive arms. —
⁶ ' Academicks : ' three schools—Plato, Arcesilas, and Carneades being their heads.

Till time mature thee to a kingdom's weight; 282
 These rules will render thee a king complete
 Within thyself, much more with empire join'd.

To whom our Saviour sagely thus replied.
 Think not but that I know these things, or think
 I know them not; not therefore am I short
 Of knowing what I ought: he, who receives
 Light from above, from the fountain of light,
 No other doctrine needs, though granted true; 290
 But these are false, or little else but dreams,
 Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm.

The first¹ and wisest of them all profess'd
 To know this only, that he nothing knew;
 The next² to fabling fell, and smooth conceits;
 A third³ sort doubted all things, though plain sense;
 Others⁴ in virtue plac'd felicity,
 But virtue join'd with riches and long life;
 In corporal pleasure he,⁵ and careless ease;
 The Stoick last in philosophick pride, 300
 By him called virtue; and his virtuous man,
 Wise, perfect in himself, and all possessing
 Equal to God, oft shames not to prefer,
 As fearing God nor man, contemning all
 Wealth, pleasure, pain or torment, death and life,
 Which, when he lists, he leaves, or boasts he can,
 For all his tedious talk is but vain boast,
 Or subtle shifts conviction to evade.

Alas! what can they teach, and not mislead,
 Ignorant of themselves, of God much more, 310
 And how the world began, and how man fell
 Degraded by himself, on grace depending?
 Much of the soul they talk, but all awry,

¹ 'First:' Socrates.—² 'Next:' Plato.—³ 'A third:' Pyrrho.—⁴ 'Others:' followers of Aristotle.—⁵ 'He:' Epicurus.

And in themselves seek virtue, and to themselves 314
 All glory arrogate, to God give none;
 Rather accuse him under usual names,
 Fortune and Fate, as one regardless quite
 Of mortal things. Who therefore seeks in these
 True wisdom, finds her not; or, by delusion,
 Far worse, her false resemblance only meets, 320
 An empty cloud. However, many books,
 Wise men have said, are wearisome; who reads
 Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
 A spirit and judgment equal or superiour,
 (And what he brings what needs he elsewhere seek?)
 Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
 Deep vers'd in books, and shallow in himself,
 Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys
 And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge;¹
 As children² gathering pebbles on the shore. 330
 Or, if I would delight my private hours
 With musick or with poem, where so soon
 As in our native language, can I find
 That solace? All our law and story strew'd
 With hymns, our psalms with artful terms inscrib'd,
 Our Hebrew songs and harps, in Babylon
 That pleas'd so well our victors' ear, declare
 That rather Greece from us these arts deriv'd;
 Ill imitated, while they loudest sing
 The vices of their Deities, and their own, 340
 In fable, hymn, or song, so personating³
 Their gods ridiculous, and themselves past shame.
 Remove their swelling epithets, thick laid
 As varnish on a harlot's cheek, the rest,
 Thin sown with aught of profit or delight,

¹ 'Worth a sponge:' i. e., deserving to be blotted out.—² 'As children,' &c.: remarkable anticipation of Newton's famous saying.—³ 'Personating:' i. e., loudly celebrating.

Will far be found unworthy to compare 346
With Sion's songs, to all true tastes excelling,
Where God is prais'd aright, and God-like men,
The Holiest of Holies, and his Saints,
(Such are from God inspir'd, not such from thee),
Unless where moral virtue is express'd
By light of Nature, not in all quite lost.
Their orators thou then extoll'st, as those
The top of eloquence ; statist¹ indeed,
And lovers of their country, as may seem ;
But herein to our prophets far beneath,
As men divinely taught, and better teaching
The solid rules of civil government,
In their majestic unaffected style,
Than all the oratory of Greece and Rome. 360
In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt,
What makes a nation happy, and keeps it so,
What ruins kingdoms, and lays cities flat ;
These only with our law best form a king.

So spake the Son of God ; but Satan, now
Quite at a loss (for all his darts were spent),
Thus to our Saviour with stern brow replied.

Since neither wealth nor honour, arms nor arts,
Kingdom nor empire pleases thee, nor aught
By me propos'd in life contemplative 370
Or active, tended on by glory or fame,
What dost thou in this world ? The wilderness
For thee is fittest place ; I found thee there,
And thither will return thee ; yet remember
What I foretell thee, soon thou shalt have cause
To wish thou never hadst rejected, thus
Nicely or cautiously, my offer'd aid,
Which would have set thee in short time with ease

¹ 'Statists : ' statesmen.

On David's throne, or throne of all the world, 379
 Now at full age, fulness of time, thy season,
 When prophecies of thee are best fulfill'd.
 Now contrary, if I read aught in Heaven,
 Or Heaven write aught of fate, by what the stars
 Voluminous, or single characters,
 In their conjunction met, give me to spell,
 Sorrows, and labours, opposition, hate
 Attend thee, scorns, reproaches, injuries,
 Violence and stripes, and lastly cruel death ;
 A kingdom they portend thee, but what kingdom,
 Real or allegorick, I discern not ; 390
 Nor when ; eternal sure, as without end,
 Without beginning ; for no date prefix'd
 Directs me in the starry rubrick set.

So saying he took (for still he knew his power
 Not yet expir'd), and to the wilderness
 Brought back the Son of God, and left him there,
 Feigning to disappear. Darkness now rose,
 As day-light sunk, and brought in lowering Night
 Her shadowy offspring ; unsubstantial both,
 Privation mere of light and absent day. 400
 Our Saviour meek, and with untroubled mind
 After his aery jaunt, though hurried sore,
 Hungry and cold, betook him to his rest,
 Wherever, under some concourse of shades,
 Whose branching arms thick intertwin'd might shield
 From dews and damps of night his shelter'd head ;
 But, shelter'd, slept in vain ; for at his head
 The Tempter watch'd, and soon with ugly dreams
 Disturb'd his sleep. And either tropick now
 'Gan thunder, and both ends of Heaven ; the clouds, 410
 From many a horrid rift, abortive pour'd
 Fierce rain with lightning mix'd, water with fire

In ruin reconcil'd : nor slept the winds 413
 Within their stony caves, but rush'd abroad
 From the four hinges of the world, and fell
 On the vex'd wilderness, whose tallest pines,
 Though rooted deep as high, and sturdiest oaks,
 Bow'd their stiff necks, loaden with stormy blasts
 Or torn up sheer. Ill wast thou shrouded then,
 O patient Son of God, yet only stood'st 420
 Unshaken ! Nor yet staid the terrour there ;
 Infernal ghosts and hellish furies round
 Environ'd thee, some howl'd, some yell'd, some shriek'd,
 Some bent at thee their fiery darts, while thou
 Sat'st unappall'd in calm and sinless peace !
 Thus pass'd the night so foul, till Morning fair
 Came forth, with pilgrim steps, in amice grey ;¹
 Who with her radiant finger still'd the roar
 Of thunder, chas'd the clouds, and laid the winds,
 And grisly spectres, which the Fiend had rais'd 430
 To tempt the Son of God with terrours dire.
 And now the sun with more effectual beams
 Had cheer'd the face of earth, and dried the wet
 From drooping plant, or dropping tree ; the birds,
 Who all things now behold more fresh and green,
 After a night of storm so ruinous,
 Clear'd up their choicest notes in bush and spray,
 To gratulate the sweet return of morn.
 Nor yet, amidst this joy and brightest morn,
 Was absent, after all his mischief done, 440
 The Prince of darkness ; glad would also seem
 Of this fair change, and to our Saviour came ;
 Yet with no new device (they all were spent),
 Rather by this his last affront resolv'd,
 Desperate of better course, to vent his rage

¹ ' Amice grey : ' a gray habit worn by ecclesiastics and pilgrims.

And mad despite to be so oft repell'd. 446
 Him walking on a sunny hill he found,
 Back'd on the north and west by a thick wood ;
 Out of the wood he starts in wonted¹ shape,
 And in a careless mood thus to him said.

Fair morning yet betides thee, Son of God,
 After a dismal night ; I heard the wrack,
 As earth and sky would mingle ; but myself
 Was distant ; and these flaws,² though mortals fear them
 As dangerous to the pillar'd frame of Heaven,
 Or to the earth's dark basis underneath,
 Are to the main³ as inconsiderable
 And harmless, if not wholesome, as a sneeze
 To man's less universe, and soon are gone ;
 Yet, as being oft times noxious where they light 460
 On man, beast, plant, wasteful and turbulent,
 Like turbulencies in the affairs of men,
 Over whose heads they roar, and seem to point,
 They oft fore-signify and threaten ill :
 This tempest at this desert most was bent ;
 Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st.
 Did I not tell thee, if thou didst reject
 The perfect season offer'd with my aid
 To win thy destin'd seat, but wilt prolong
 All to the push of fate, pursue thy way 470
 Of gaining David's throne no man knows when,—
 For both the when and how is no where told,—
 Thou shalt be what thou art ordain'd, no doubt ;
 For Angels have proclaim'd it, but concealing
 The time and means. Each act is rightliest done,
 Not when it must, but when it may be best :
 If thou observe not this, be sure to find,

¹ 'Wonted : ' his own proper form.—² 'Flaws : ' gusts.—³ 'The main : ' *i. e.*, the great whole.

What I foretold thee, many a hard assay 478
Of dangers, and adversities, and pains,
Ere thou of Israel's scepter get fast hold ;
Whereof this ominous night, that clos'd thee round,
So many terrors, voices, prodigies,
May warn thee, as a sure foregoing sign.

So talk'd he, while the Son of God went on
And staid not, but in brief him answer'd thus.

Me worse than wet thou find'st not ; other harm
Those terrours which thou speak'st of, did me none ;
I never fear'd they could, though noising loud
And threatening nigh : what they can do, as signs
Betokening, or ill boding, I contemn 490
As false portents, not sent from God, but thee ;
Who, knowing I shall reign past thy preventing,
Obtrud'st thy offer'd aid, that I, accepting,
At least might seem to hold all power of thee,
Ambitious Spirit ! and wouldst be thought my God ;
And storm'st refus'd, thinking to terrify
Me to thy will ! desist (thou art discern'd,
And toil'st in vain), nor me in vain molest.

To whom the Fiend, now swoln with rage, replied.
Then hear, O Son of David, Virgin-born, 500
For Son of God to me is yet in doubt ;
Of the Messiah I had heard foretold
By all the Prophets ; of thy birth at length,
Announc'd by Gabriel, with the first I knew,
And of the angelick song in Bethlehem field,
On thy birth-night that sung thee Saviour born.
From that time seldom have I ceas'd to eye
Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth,
Thy manhood last, though yet in private bred ;
Till at the ford of Jordan, whither all 510
Flock to the Baptist, I among the rest

(Though not to be baptiz'd), by voice from Heaven 512
 Heard thee pronounc'd the Son of God belov'd.
 Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view
 And narrower scrutiny, that I might learn
 In what degree or meaning thou art call'd
 The Son of God ; which bears no single sense.
 The Son of God I also am, or was ;
 And if I was, I am ; relation stands ;
 All men are Sons of God ; yet thee I thought 520
 In some respect far higher, so declar'd :
 Therefore I watch'd thy footsteps from that hour
 And follow'd thee still on to this waste wild ;
 Where, by all best conjectures, I collect
 Thou art to be my fatal enemy :
 Good reason then, if I before-hand seek
 To understand my adversary, who
 And what he is ; his wisdom, power, intent ;
 By parl or composition, truce or league,
 To win him, or win from him what I can : 530
 And opportunity I here have had
 To try thee, sift thee, and confess have found thee
 Proof against all temptation, as a rock
 Of adamant, and, as a center, firm ;
 To the utmost of mere Man both wise and good,
 Not more ; for honours, riches, kingdoms, glory,
 Have been before contemn'd, and may again.
 Therefore, to know what more thou art than Man,
 Worth naming Son of God by voice from Heaven,
 Another method I must now begin. 540

So saying, he caught him up, and, without wing
 Of hippogrif,¹ bore through the air sublime,
 Over the wilderness and o'er the plain,
 Till underneath them fair Jerusalem,

¹ 'Hippogrif:' a fabled horse often used by Ariosto to transport his heroes.

The holy city, lifted high her towers, 545
 And higher yet the glorious temple rear'd
 Her pile, far off appearing like a mount
 Of alabaster, topt with golden spires:
 There, on the highest pinnacle, he set
 The Son of God; and added thus in scorn. 550

There stand, if thou wilt stand; to stand upright
 Will ask thee skill; I to thy Father's house
 Have brought thee, and highest plac'd; highest is best:
 Now show thy progeny; if not to stand,
 Cast thyself down; safely, if Son of God:
 For it is written, "He will give command
 Concerning thee to his Angels, in their hands
 They shall up lift thee, lest at any time
 Thou chance to dash thy foot against a stone."

To whom thus Jesus: Also it is written, 560
 "Tempt not the Lord thy God." He said, and stood:
 But Satan, smitten with amazement, fell.
 As when Earth's son Antæus (to compare
 Small things with greatest), in Irassa strove
 With Jove's Alcides,¹ and, oft foil'd, still rose,
 Receiving from his mother Earth new strength,
 Fresh from his fall, and fiercer grapple join'd,
 Throttled at length in the air, expir'd and fell;
 So, after many a foil, the Tempter proud,
 Renewing fresh assaults amidst his pride, 570
 Fell whence he stood to see his victor fall:
 And as that Theban monster,² that propos'd
 Her riddle, and him who solv'd it not devour'd,
 That once found out and solv'd, for grief and spite
 Cast herself headlong from the Ismenian³ steep;
 So, struck with dread and anguish, fell the Fiend,

¹ 'Alcides:' Hercules, son of Jove and Alcmena.—² 'Theban monster:' the Sphynx.—³ 'Ismenian:' a hill called so from the river Ismenus, near Thebes.

And to his crew, that sat consulting, brought 577
 (Joyless triumphals of his hop'd success)
 Ruin, and desperation, and dismay,
 Who durst so proudly tempt the Son of God.
 So Satan fell; and straight a fiery globe
 Of Angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,
 Who on their plummy vans receiv'd him soft
 From his uneasy station, and upbore,
 As on a floating couch, through the blithe air;
 Then, in a flowery valley, set him down
 On a green bank, and set before him spread
 A table of celestial food, divine
 Ambrosial fruits, fetch'd from the tree of life,
 And, from the fount of life, ambrosial drink, 590
 That soon refresh'd him wearied, and repair'd
 What hunger, if aught hunger, had impair'd,
 Or thirst; and, as he fed, angelick quires
 Sung heavenly anthems of his victory
 Over Temptation and the Tempter proud.

True image of the Father; whether thron'd
 In the bosom of bliss, and light of light
 Conceiving; or, remote from Heaven, enshrin'd
 In fleshly tabernacle, and human form,
 Wandering the wilderness; whatever place, 600
 Habit, or state, or motion, still expressing
 The Son of God, with God-like force endu'd
 Against the attempter of thy Father's throne,
 And thief of Paradise! Him long of old
 Thou didst debel,¹ and down from Heaven cast
 With all his army; now thou hast aveng'd
 Supplanted Adam, and, by vanquishing
 Temptation, hast regain'd lost Paradise,
 And frustrated the conquest fraudulent.

¹ 'Debel:' defeat.

He never more henceforth will dare set foot 610
 In Paradise to tempt; his snares are broke :
 For, though that seat of earthly bliss be fail'd,
 A fairer Paradise is founded now
 For Adam and his chosen sons, whom thou,
 A Saviour, art come down to re-install,
 Where they shall dwell secure, when time shall be,
 Of Tempter and Temptation without fear.
 But thou, infernal Serpent! shalt not long
 Rule in the clouds; like an autumnal star, 619
 Or lightning, thou shalt fall from Heaven, trod down
 Under his feet: for proof, ere this thou feel'st
 Thy wound (yet not thy last and deadliest wound),
 By this repulse receiv'd, and hold'st in Hell
 No triumph: in all her gates Abaddon¹ rues
 Thy bold attempt. Hereafter learn with awe
 To dread the Son of God: He, all unarm'd,
 Shall chase thee, with the terrour of his voice,
 From thy demoniack holds, possession foul,
 Thee and thy legions; yelling they shall fly,
 And beg to hide them in a herd of swine, 630
 Lest he command them down into the deep,
 Bound, and to torment sent before their time.—
 Hail, Son of the Most High, heir of both worlds,
 Queller of Satan! On thy glorious work
 Now enter; and begin to save mankind.

Thus they the Son of God, our Saviour meek,
 Sung victor, and, from heavenly feast refresh'd,
 Brought on his way with joy; he, unobserv'd,
 Home to his mother's house private return'd.

¹ 'Abaddon:' the bottomless pit.

SAMSON AGONISTES.

A Dramatic Poem.

Tragœdia est imitatio actionis seriæ, &c. per misericordiam et metum perficiens talium affectuum lustrationem.

OF THAT SORT OF DRAMATIC POEM WHICH IS CALLED TRAGEDY.

TRAGEDY, as it was anciently composed, hath been ever held the gravest, moralest, and most profitable of all other poems: therefore said by Aristotle to be of power, by raising pity and fear, or terror, to purge the mind of those and such like passions; that is, to temper and reduce them to just measure with a kind of delight, stirred up by reading or seeing those passions well imitated. Nor is Nature wanting in her own effects to make good his assertion: for so, in physic, things of melancholic hue and quality are used against melancholy, sour against sour, salt to remove salt humours. Hence philosophers and other gravest writers, as Cicero, Plutarch, and others, frequently cite out of tragic poets both to adorn and illustrate their discourse. The Apostle Paul himself thought it not unworthy to insert a verse of Euripides into the text of Holy Scripture, 1 Cor. xv. 33; and Paræus, commenting on the Revelation, divides the whole book, as a tragedy, into acts, distinguished each by a chorus of heavenly harpings and song between. Heretofore men in highest dignity have laboured not a little to be thought able to compose a tragedy. Of that honour Dionysius the elder was no less ambitious, than before of his attaining to the tyranny. Augustus Cæsar also had begun his Ajax, but, unable to please his own judgment with what he had begun, left it unfinished. Seneca, the philosopher, is by some thought the author of those tragedies (at least the best of them) that go under that name. Gregory Nazianzen, a Father of the Church, thought it not unbeseeming the sanctity of his person to write a

tragedy, which is entitled *Christ Suffering*. This is mentioned to vindicate tragedy from the small esteem, or rather infamy, which in the account of many it undergoes at this day with other common interludes; happening through the poet's error of intermixing comic stuff with tragic sadness and gravity; or introducing trivial and vulgar persons, which by all judicious hath been counted absurd; and brought in without discretion, corruptly to gratify the people. And though Ancient Tragedy use no prologue, yet using sometimes, in case of self-defence, or explanation, that which Martial calls an epistle; in behalf of this tragedy coming forth after the ancient manner, much different from what among us passes for best, thus much before-hand may be epistled; that Chorus is here introduced after the Greek manner, not ancient only but modern, and still in use among the Italians. In the modelling therefore of this poem, with good reason, the Ancients and Italians are rather followed, as of much more authority and fame. The measure of verse used in the Chorus is of all sorts, called by the Greeks Monostrophic, or rather Apolelymenon,¹ without regard had to Strophe, Antistrophe, or Epode, which were a kind of stanzas framed only for the music, then used with the Chorus that sung; not essential to the poem, and therefore not material; or, being divided into stanzas or pauses, they may be called Allæostropha. Division into act and scene, referring chiefly to the stage (to which this work never was intended), is here omitted.

It suffices if the whole drama be found not produced beyond the fifth act. Of the style and uniformity, and that commonly called the plot, whether intricate or explicit, which is nothing indeed but such oeconomy or disposition of the fable as may stand best with verisimilitude and decorum; they only will best judge who are not unacquainted with Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, the three tragic poets unequalled yet by any, and the best rule to all who endeavour to write tragedy. The circumscription of time, wherein the whole drama begins and ends, is, according to ancient rule, and best example, within the space of twenty-four hours.

¹ 'Apolelymenon:' i. e., free from all metrical restraint.

SAMSON AGONISTES.¹

THE PERSONS.

SAMSON.

MANOAH, *the Father of*
Samson.

DALILA, *his Wife.*

HARAPHA, *of Gath.*

Public Officer.

Messenger.

Chorus of Danites.

The Scene before the Prison in Gaza.

THE ARGUMENT.

Samson, made captive, blind, and now in the prison at Gaza, there to labour as in a common workhouse, on a festival day, in the general cessation from labour, comes forth into the open air, to a place nigh, somewhat retired, there to sit awhile and bemoan his condition. Where he happens at length to be visited by certain friends and equals of his tribe, which make the Chorus, who seek to comfort him what they can; then by his old father Manoah, who endeavours the like, and withal tells him his purpose to procure his liberty by ransom; lastly, that this feast was proclaimed by the Philistines as a day of thanksgiving for their deliverance from the hands of Samson, which yet more troubles him. Manoah then departs to prosecute his endeavour with the Philistine lords for Samson's redemption; who in the mean while is visited by other persons; and lastly by a public officer to require his coming to the feast before the lords and people, to play or show his strength in their presence; he at first refuses, dismissing the public officer with absolute denial to come; at length, persuaded inwardly that this was from God, he yields to go along with him, who came now the second time with great threatenings to fetch him: The Chorus yet remaining on the place, Manoah returns full of joyful hope to procure ere long his son's deliverance: in the midst of which discourse a Hebrew comes in haste, confusedly at first, and afterward more distinctly, relating the catastrophe, what Samson had done to the Philistines, and by accident to himself; wherewith the tragedy ends.

SAMSON, *Attendant leading him.*

A LITTLE onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little farther on;

¹ 'Agonistes:' i. e., the Athlete.

For yonder bank hath choice of sun or shade: 3
There I am wont to sit, when any chance
Relieves me from my task of servile toil,
Daily in the common prison else enjoin'd me,
Where I, a prisoner chain'd, scarce freely draw
The air imprison'd also, close and damp,
Unwholesome draught: but here I feel amends,
The breath of Heaven fresh blowing, pure and sweet, 10
With day-spring born; here leave me to respire.—
This day a solemn feast the people hold
To Dagon,¹ their sea-idol, and forbid
Laborious works; unwillingly this rest
Their superstition yields me; hence with leave
Retiring from the popular noise, I seek
This unfrequented place to find some ease,
Ease to the body some, none to the mind
From restless thoughts, that, like a deadly swarm
Of hornets arm'd, no sooner found alone, 20
But rush upon me thronging, and present
Times past, what once I was, and what am now.
O, wherefore was my birth from Heaven foretold
Twice by an Angel, who at last in sight
Of both my parents all in flames ascended
From off the altar, where an offering burn'd,
As in a fiery column charioting
His God-like presence, and from some great act
Or benefit reveal'd to Abraham's race?
Why was my breeding order'd and prescrib'd 30
As of a person separate to God,
Design'd for great exploits; if I must die
Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my eyes put out,
Made of my enemies the scorn and gaze;
To grind in brazen fetters under task

¹ 'Dagon:' the idol of the Philistines, half a man and half a fish.

With this Heaven-gifted strength ? O glorious strength
Put to the labour of a beast, debas'd 37
Lower than bond-slave ! Promise was that I
Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver ;
Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him
Eyeless in Gaza at the mill with slaves,
Himself in bonds under Philistian yoke :
Yet stay, let me not rashly call in doubt
Divine prediction ; what if all foretold
Had been fulfill'd but through mine own default,
Whom have I to complain of but myself ?
Who this high gift of strength committed to me,
In what part lodg'd, how easily bereft me,
Under the seal of silence could not keep,
But weakly to a woman must reveal it, 50
O'ercome with importunity and tears.
O impotence of mind, in body strong !
But what is strength without a double share
Of wisdom ? vast, unwieldy, burdensome,
Proudly secure, yet liable to fall
By weakest subtleties, not made to rule,
But to subserve where wisdom bears command !
God, when he gave me strength, to show withal
How slight the gift was, hung it in my hair.
But peace, I must not quarrel with the will 60
Of highest dispensation, which herein
Haply had ends above my reach to know :
Suffices that to me strength is my bane,
And proves the source of all my miseries ;
So many, and so huge, that each apart
Would ask a life to wail ; but chief of all,
O loss of sight, of thee I most complain !
Blind among enemies, O worse than chains,
Dungeon, or beggery, or decrepit age !

Light, the prime work of God, to me is extinct, 70
And all her various objects of delight
Annull'd, which might in part my grief have eas'd,
Inferiour to the vilest now become
Of man or worm; the vilest here excel me;
They creep, yet see; I, dark in light, expos'd
To daily fraud, contempt, abuse, and wrong,
Within doors, or without, still as a fool,
In power of others, never in my own;
Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.
O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon, 80
Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse
Without all hope of day!
O first created Beam, and thou great Word,
"Let there be light, and light was over all;"
Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?
The sun to me is dark
And silent as the moon,
When she deserts the night,
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
Since light so necessary is to life, 90
And almost life itself, if it be true
That light is in the soul,
She all in every part; why was the sight
To such a tender ball as the eye confin'd,
So obvious and so easy to be quench'd?
And not, as feeling, through all parts diffus'd,
That she might look at will through every pore?
Then had I not been thus exil'd from light,
As in the land of darkness, yet in light,
To live a life half-dead, a living death, 100
And buried; but, O yet more miserable!
Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave;
Buried, yet not exempt,

By privilege of death and burial, 104
 From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs;
 But made hereby obnoxious more
 To all the miseries of life,
 Life in captivity
 Among inhuman foes.

But who are these? for with joint pace I hear 110
 The tread of many feet steering this way;
 Perhaps my enemies, who come to stare
 At my affliction, and perhaps to insult,
 Their daily practice to afflict me more.

Enter CHORUS.

Cho. This, this is he; softly awhile,
 Let us not break in upon him:
 O change beyond report, thought, or belief!
 See how he lies at random, carelessly diffus'd,
 With languish'd head unpropt,
 As one past hope, abandon'd, 120
 And by himself given over;
 In slavish habit, ill-fitted weeds
 O'er-worn and soil'd;
 Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,
 That heroick, that renown'd
 Irresistible Samson? whom, unarm'd,
 No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast, could withstand;
 Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid;
 Ran on embattled armies clad in iron;
 And, weaponless himself, 130
 Made arms ridiculous, useless the forgery
 Of brazen shield and spear, the hammer'd cuirass,
 Chalybean¹ temper'd steel, and frock of mail
 Adamantéan proof?

¹ 'Chalybean:' as if made by the Chalybes, famous ancient workers in iron.

But safest he who stood aloof, 135
 When insupportably his foot advanc'd,
 In scorn of their proud arms and warlike tools,
 Spurn'd them to death by troops. The bold Ascalonite¹
 Fled from his lion ramp;² old warriors turn'd
 Their plated backs under his heel: 140
 Or, grovelling, soil'd their crested helmets in the dust.
 Then with what trivial weapon came to hand,
 The jaw of a dead ass, his sword of bone,
 A thousand foreskins fell, the flower of Palestine,
 In Ramath-lechi, famous to this day.
 Then by main force pull'd up, and on his shoulders bore
 The gates of Azza,³ post, and massy bar,
 Up to the hill by Hebron,⁴ seat of giants old,
 No journey of a sabbath-day, and loaded so;
 Like whom⁵ the Gentiles feign to bear up Heaven. 150
 Which shall I first bewail,
 Thy bondage or lost sight;
 Prison within prison
 Inseparably dark?
 Thou art become (O worst imprisonment!)
 The dungeon of thyself; thy soul,
 (Which men enjoying sight oft without cause complain)
 Imprison'd now indeed,
 In real darkness of the body dwells,
 Shut up from outward light 160
 To incorporate with gloomy night;
 For inward light, alas!
 Puts forth no visual beam.
 O mirrour of our fickle state,
 Since man on earth, unparallel'd!

¹ 'Ascalon:' one of the five principal cities of the Philistines.—² 'Ramp:' from rampant.—³ 'Azza:' another name for Gaza.—⁴ 'Hebron:' city of the ancient Anakims.—⁵ 'Like whom:' Atlas.

The rarer thy example stands, 166
 By how much from the top of wonderful glory,
 Strongest of mortal men,
 To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fallen.
 For him I reckon not in high estate
 Whom long descent of birth,
 Or the sphere of fortune, raises ;
 But thee whose strength, while virtue was her mate,
 Might have subdu'd the earth,
 Universally crown'd with highest praises.

Sam. I hear the sound of words ; their sense the air
 Dissolves unjointed ere it reach my ear.

Cho. He speaks, let us draw nigh. Matchless in might,
 The glory late of Israel, now the grief ;
 We come, thy friends and neighbours not unknown, 180
 From Eshtaol and Zora's¹ fruitful vale,
 To visit or bewail thee ; or, if better,
 Counsel or consolation we may bring,
 Salve to thy sores ; apt words have power to swage
 The tumours of a troubled mind,
 And are as balm to fester'd wounds.

Sam. Your coming, Friends, revives me ; for I learn,
 Now of my own experience, not by talk,
 How counterfeit a coin they are who friends
 Bear in their superscription, (of the most 190
 I would be understood ;) in prosperous days
 They swarm, but in adverse withdraw their head,
 Not to be found, though sought. Ye see, O Friends,
 How many evils have enclos'd me round ;
 Yet that which was the worst now least afflicts me,
 Blindness ; for had I sight, confus'd with shame,
 How could I once look up, or heave the head,

¹ 'Eshtaol and Zora : ' two towns in Dan ; the latter, Samson's birth-place.

Who, like a foolish pilot, have shipwreck'd 198
 My vessel trusted to me from above,
 Gloriously rigg'd ; and for a word, a tear,
 Fool ! have divulg'd the secret gift of God
 To a deceitful woman ? tell me, Friends,
 Am I not sung and proverb'd for a fool
 In every street ? do they not say, how well
 Are come upon him his deserts ? yet why ?
 Immeasurable strength they might behold
 In me, of wisdom nothing more than mean ;
 This with the other should, at least, have pair'd,
 These two, proportion'd ill, drove me transverse.

Cho. Tax not divine disposal ; wisest men 210
 Have err'd, and by bad women been deceiv'd ;
 And shall again, pretend they ne'er so wise.
 Deject not then so overmuch thyself,
 Who hast of sorrow thy full load besides :
 Yet, truth to say, I oft have heard men wonder
 Why thou shouldst wed Philistian women rather
 Than of thine own tribe fairer, or as fair,
 At least of thy own nation, and as noble.

Sam. The first I saw at Timna, and she pleas'd 220
 Me, not my parents, that I sought to wed
 The daughter of an infidel : They knew not
 That what I motion'd was of God ; I knew
 From intimate impulse, and therefore urg'd
 The marriage on ; that by occasion hence
 I might begin Israel's deliverance,
 The work to which I was divinely call'd.
 She proving false, the next I took to wife
 (O that I never had ! fond wish too late),
 Was in the vale of Sorec, Dalila,
 That specious monster, my accomplish'd snare. 230
 I thought it lawful from my former act,

And the same end ; still watching to oppress 232
 Israel's oppressours : of what now I suffer
 She was not the prime cause, but I myself
 Who, vanquish'd with a peal of words, (O weakness !)
 Gave up my fort of silence to a woman.

Cho. In seeking just occasion to provoke
 The Philistine, thy country's enemy,
 Thou never wast remiss, I bear thee witness :
 Yet Israël still serves with all his sons. 240

Sam. That fault I take not on me, but transfer
 On Israel's governours and heads of tribes,
 Who, seeing those great acts which God had done
 Singly by me against their conquerours,
 Acknowledg'd not, or not at all consider'd,
 Deliverance offer'd : I on the other side
 Us'd no ambition to commend my deeds ;
 The deeds themselves, though mute, spoke loud the doer :
 But they persisted deaf, and would not seem
 To count them things worth notice, till at length 250
 Their lords the Philistines with gather'd powers
 Enter'd Judea seeking me, who then
 Safe to the rock of Etham¹ was retir'd ;
 Not flying, but fore-casting in what place
 To set upon them, what advantag'd best :
 Meanwhile the men of Judah, to prevent
 The harass of their land, beset me round ;
 I willingly on some conditions came
 Into their hands, and they as gladly yield me,
 To the uncircumcis'd a welcome prey, 260
 Bound with two cords ; but cords to me were threads
 Touch'd with the flame : on their whole host I flew
 Unarm'd, and with a trivial weapon fell'd
 Their choicest youth ; they only liv'd who fled.

¹ 'Etham : ' see Judges xv. 8.

Had Judah that day join'd, or one whole tribe, 265
 They had by this possess'd the towers of Gath,
 And lorded over them whom they now serve:
 But what more oft, in nations grown corrupt,
 And by their vices brought to servitude,
 Than to love bondage more than liberty,
 Bondage with ease than strenuous liberty; 270
 And to despise, or envy, or suspect
 Whom God hath of his special favour rais'd
 As their deliverer? if he aught begin,
 How frequent to desert him, and at last
 To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds?

Cho. Thy words to my remembrance bring
 How Succoth and the fort of Penuel
 Their great deliverer contemn'd,
 The matchless Gideon, in pursuit 280
 Of Madian and her vanquish'd kings:
 And how ingrateful Ephraim¹
 Had dealt with Jephtha, who by argument,
 Not worse than by his shield and spear,
 Defended Israel from the Ammonite,
 Had not his prowess quell'd their pride
 In that sore battle, when so many died
 Without reprieve, adjudg'd to death,
 For want of well pronouncing Shibboleth.

Sam. Of such examples add me to the roll; 290
 Me easily indeed mine may neglect,
 But God's propos'd deliverance not so.

Cho. Just are the ways of God,
 And justifiable to men;
 Unless there be, who think not God at all:
 If any be, they walk obscure;
 For of such doctrine never was there school,

¹ 'Succoth,' 'Penuel,' 'Ephraim:' see Judges viii. and xi.

But the heart of the fool, 298
And no man therein doctor but himself.

Yet more there be, who doubt his ways not just,
As to his own edicts found contradicting,
Then give the reins to wandering thought,
Regardless of his glory's diminution ;
Till, by their own perplexities involv'd,
They ravel more, still less resolv'd,
But never find self-satisfying solution.

As if they would confine the Interminable,
And tie him to his own prescript,
Who made our laws to bind us, not himself,
And hath full right to exempt 310
Whom so it pleases him by choice
From national obstruction, without taint
Of sin, or legal debt ;
For with his own laws he can best dispense.

He would not else, who never wanted means,
Nor in respect of the enemy just cause,
To set his people free,
Have prompted this heroick Nazarite,
Against his vow of strictest purity,
To seek in marriage that fallacious bride, 320
Unclean, unchaste.

Down, reason, then ; at least vain reasonings, down ;
Though reason here aver,
That moral verdict quits her of unclean :
Unchaste was subsequent, her stain not his.

But see ! here comes thy reverend Sire
With careful step, locks white as down,
Old Manoah : Advise
Forthwith how thou ought'st to receive him.

Sam. Ay me ! another inward grief, awak'd 330
With mention of that name, renews the assault.

Enter MANOAH.

Man. Brethren and men of Dan, for such ye seem,
Though in this uncouth place ; if old respect, 333
As I suppose, towards your once gloried friend,
My son, now captive, hither hath inform'd
Your younger feet, while mine, cast back with age,
Came lagging after ; say if he be here.

Cho. As signal now in low dejected state,
As erst in highest, behold him where he lies.

Man. O miserable change ! is this the man, 340
That invincible Samson, far renown'd,
The dread of Israel's foes, who with a strength
Equivalent to Angels walk'd their streets,
None offering fight ; who single combatant
Duell'd their armies rank'd in proud array,
Himself an army, now unequal match
To save himself against a coward arm'd
At one spear's length ! O ever-failing trust
In mortal strength ! and oh ! what not in man
Deceivable and vain ? Nay, what thing good 350
Pray'd for, but often proves our woe, our bane ?
I pray'd for children, and thought barrenness
In wedlock a reproach ; I gain'd a son,
And such a son as all men hail'd me happy ;—
Who would be now a father in my stead ?
O wherefore did God grant me my request,
And as a blessing with such pomp adorn'd ?
Why are his gifts desirable, to tempt
Our earnest prayers, then, given with solemn hand
As graces, draw a scorpion's tail behind ? 360
For this did the Angel twice descend ? for this
Ordain'd thy nurture holy, as of a plant
Select, and sacred, glorious for awhile,
The miracle of men ; then in an hour

Ensnar'd, assaulted, overcome, led bound, 365
Thy foes' derision, captive, poor, and blind,
Into a dungeon thrust, to work with slaves?
Alas! methinks whom God hath chosen once
To worthiest deeds, if he through frailty err,
He should not so o'erwhelm, and as a thrall 370
Subject him to so foul indignities,
Be it but for honour's sake of former deeds.

Sam. Appoint not heavenly disposition, Father;
Nothing of all these evils hath befallen me
But justly; I myself have brought them on,
Sole author I, sole cause: If aught seem vile,
As vile hath been my folly, who have profan'd
The mystery of God given me under pledge
Of vow, and have betray'd it to a woman,
A Canaanite, my faithless enemy. 380
This well I knew, nor was at all surpris'd,
But warn'd by oft experience: Did not she
Of Timna first betray me, and reveal
The secret wrested from me in her highth
Of nuptial love profess'd, carrying it straight
To them who had corrupted her, my spies,
And rivals? In this other was there found
More faith, who also in her prime of love,
Spousal embraces, vitiated with gold,
Though offer'd only, by the scent conceiv'd 390
Her spurious first-born, treason against me?
Thrice she assay'd with flattering prayers and sighs,
And amorous reproaches, to win from me
My capital secret, in what part my strength
Lay stor'd, in what part summ'd, that she might know;
Thrice I deluded her, and turn'd to sport
Her importunity, each time perceiving
How openly, and with what impudence

She purpos'd to betray me, and (which was worse 399
 Than undissembled hate) with what contempt
 She sought to make me traitor to myself ;
 Yet the fourth time, when, mustering all her wiles,
 With blandish'd parlies, feminine assaults,
 Tongue-batteries, she surceas'd not, day nor night,
 To storm me over-watch'd, and wearied out,
 At times when men seek most repose and rest,
 I yielded, and unlock'd her all my heart,
 Who, with a grain of manhood well resolv'd,
 Might easily have shook off all her snares :
 But foul effeminacy held me yok'd 410
 Her bond-slave ; O indignity, O blot
 To honour and religion ! servile mind
 Rewarded well with servile punishment !
 The base degree to which I now am fallen,
 These rags, this grinding, is not yet so base
 As was my former servitude, ignoble,
 Unmanly, ignominious, infamous,
 True slavery, and that blindness worse than this,
 That saw not how degenerately I serv'd.

Man. I cannot praise thy marriage choices, Son, 420
 Rather approv'd them not : but thou didst plead
 Divine impulsion prompting how thou might'st
 Find some occasion to infest our foes.
 I state not that ; this I am sure, our foes
 Found soon occasion thereby to make thee
 Their captive, and their triumph ; thou the sooner
 Temptation found'st, or over-potent charms,
 To violate the sacred trust of silence
 Deposited within thee ; which to have kept
 Tacit, was in thy power : true ; and thou bear'st 430
 Enough, and more, the burden of that fault ;
 Bitterly hast thou paid, and still art paying,

That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains ; 433
This day the Philistines a popular feast
Here celebrate in Gaza ; and proclaim
Great pomp, and sacrifice, and praises loud,
To Dagon, as their God who hath deliver'd
Thee, Samson, bound and blind into their hands,
Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.
So Dagon shall be magnified, and God, 440
Besides whom is no God, compar'd with idols,
Disglorified, blasphem'd, and had in scorn
By the idolatrous rout amidst their wine ;
Which to have come to pass by means of thee,
Samson, of all thy sufferings think the heaviest,
Of all reproach the most with shame that ever
Could have befallen thee and thy father's house.

Sam. Father, I do acknowledge and confess
That I this honour, I this pomp, have brought
To Dagon, and advanc'd his praises high 450
Among the Heathen round ; to God have brought
Dishonour, obloquy, and op'd the mouths
Of idolists, and atheists ; have brought scandal
To Israel, diffidence of God, and doubt
In feeble hearts, propense enough before
To waver, or fall off and join with idols ;
Which is my chief affliction, shame and sorrow,
The anguish of my soul, that suffers not
Mine eye to harbour sleep, or thoughts to rest.
This only hope relieves me, that the strife 460
With me hath end ; all the contést is now
'Twixt God and Dagon ; Dagon hath presum'd,
Me overthrown, to enter lists with God,
His deity comparing and preferring
Before the God of Abraham. He, be sure,
Will not connive, or linger, thus provok'd,

But will arise, and his Great Name assert :
 Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive
 Such a discomfit, as shall quite despoil him
 Of all these boasted trophies won on me,
 And with confusion blank his worshippers.

467

Man. With cause this hope relieves me, and these words
 I as a prophecy receive ; for God,
 Nothing more certain, will not long defer
 To vindicate the glory of his Name
 Against all competition, nor will long
 Endure it doubtful whether God be Lord,
 Or Dagon. But for thee what shall be done ?
 Thou must not, in the mean while here forgot,
 Lie in this miserable loathsome plight,
 Neglected. I already have made way
 To some Philistian lords, with whom to treat
 About thy ransom : well they may by this
 Have satisfied their utmost of revenge
 By pains and slaveries, worse than death, inflicted
 On thee, who now no more canst do them harm.

480

Sam. Spare that proposal, Father ; spare the trouble
 Of that solicitation ; let me here,
 As I deserve, pay on my punishment ;
 And expiate, if possible, my crime,
 Shameful garrulity. To have reveal'd
 Secrets of men, the secrets of a friend,
 How heinous had the fact been, how deserving
 Contempt, and scorn of all, to be excluded
 All friendship, and avoided as a blab,
 The mark of fool set on his front ! But I
 God's counsel have not kept, his holy secret
 Presumptuously have publish'd, impiously,
 Weakly at least, and shamefully ; a sin

490

That Gentiles in their parables condemn
To their abyss and horrid pains confin'd. 500

Man. Be penitent, and for thy fault contrite ;
But act not in thy own affliction, Son :
Repent the sin ; but, if the punishment
Thou canst avoid, self-preservation bids ;
Or the execution leave to high disposal,
And let another hand, not thine, exact
Thy penal forfeit from thyself : perhaps
God will relent, and quit thee all his debt ;
Who ever more approves, and more accepts 510
(Best pleas'd with humble and filial submission,)
Him, who, imploring mercy, sues for life,
Than who, self-rigorous, chooses death as due ;
Which argues over-just, and self-displeas'd
For self-offence, more than for God offended.
Reject not then what offer'd means, who knows
But God hath set before us, to return thee
Home to thy country and his sacred house,
Where thou mayst bring thy offerings, to avert
His farther ire, with prayers and vows renew'd. 520

Sam. His pardon I implore ; but as for life,
To what end should I seek it ? when in strength
All mortals I excell'd, and great in hopes,
With youthful courage, and magnanimous thoughts
Of birth from Heaven foretold, and high exploits,
Full of divine instinct, after some proof
Of acts indeed heroick, far beyond
The sons of Anak, famous now and blaz'd,
Fearless of danger, like a petty god
I walk'd about admir'd of all and dreaded 530
On hostile ground, none daring my affront.
Then swollen with pride, into the snare I fell
Of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains,

Soften'd with pleasure and voluptuous life ; 534
 At length to lay my head and hallow'd pledge
 Of all my strength in the lascivious lap
 Of a deceitful concubine, who shore me
 Like a tame wether, all my precious fleece,
 Then turn'd me out ridiculous, despoil'd,
 Shaven, and disarm'd among mine enemies. 540

Cho. Desire of wine and all delicious drinks,
 Which many a famous warriour overturns,
 Thou couldst repress ; nor did the dancing ruby,
 Sparkling, out-pour'd, the flavour, or the smell,
 Or taste that cheers the heart of gods and men,
 Allure thee from the cool crystalline stream.

Sam. Wherever fountain or fresh current flow'd
 Against the eastern ray, translucent, pure
 With touch ethereal of Heaven's fiery rod,
 I drank, from the clear milky juice allaying 550
 Thirst, and refresh'd : nor envied them the grape
 Whose heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.

Cho. Oh madness, to think use of strongest wines
 And strongest drinks our chief support of health,
 When God with these forbidd'n made choice to rear
 His mighty champion, strong above compare,
 Whose drink was only from the liquid brook.

Sam. But what avail'd this temperance, not complete
 Against another object more enticing ?
 What boots it at one gate to make defence, 560
 And at another to let in the foe,
 Effeminately vanquish'd ? by which means,
 Now blind, dishearten'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd,
 To what can I be useful, wherein serve
 My nation, and the work from Heaven impos'd,
 But to sit idle on the household hearth,
 A burdensome drone ; to visitants a gaze,

Or pitied object, these redundant locks 568
 Robustious to no purpose clustering down,
 Vain monument of strength ; till length of years
 And sedentary numbness craze my limbs
 To a contemptible old age obscure ?
 Here rather let me drudge, and earn my bread ;
 Till vermin, or the draff of servile food,
 Consume me, and oft invocated death
 Hasten the welcome end of all my pains.

Man. Wilt thou then serve the Philistines with that gift
 Which was expressly given thee to annoy them ?
 Better at home lie bed-rid, not only idle,
 Inglorious, unemploy'd, with age out-worn. 580
 But God, who caus'd a fountain at thy prayer
 From the dry ground to spring, thy thirst to allay
 After the brunt of battle, can as easy
 Cause light again within thy eyes to spring,
 Wherewith to serve him better than thou hast ;
 And I persuade me so ; why else this strength
 Miraculous yet remaining in those locks ?
 His might continues in thee not for naught,
 Nor shall his wonderous gifts be frustrate thus.

Sam. All otherwise to me my thoughts portend, 590
 That these dark orbs no more shall treat with light,
 Nor the other light of life continue long,
 But yield to double darkness nigh at hand :
 So much I feel my genial spirits droop,
 My hopes all flat, Nature within me seems
 In all her functions weary of herself ;
 My race of glory run, and race of shame,
 And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

Man. Believe not these suggestions, which proceed
 From anguish of the mind and humours black, 600
 That mingle with thy fancy. I however

Must not omit a father's timely care 602
 To prosecute the means of thy deliverance
 By ransom, or how else : mean while be calm,
 And healing words from these thy friends admit. [*Exit.*

Sam. O that Torment should not be confin'd
 To the body's wounds and sores,
 With maladies innumerable
 In heart, head, breast, and reins ;
 But must secret passage find 610
 To the inmost mind,
 There exercise all his fierce accidents,
 And on her purest spirits prey,
 As on entrails, joints, and limbs,
 With answerable pains, but more intense,
 Though void of corporal sense.

My griefs not only pain me
 As a lingering disease,
 But, finding no redress, ferment and rage ;
 Nor less than wounds immedicable 620
 Rankle, and fester, and gangrene,
 To black mortification.
 Thoughts, my tormenters, arm'd with deadly stings,
 Mangle my apprehensive tenderest parts,
 Exasperate, exulcerate, and raise
 Dire inflammation, which no cooling herb
 Or med'cinal liquor can assuage,
 Nor breath of vernal air from snowy Alp.¹
 Sleep hath forsook and given me o'er
 To death's benumbing opium as my only cure : 630
 Thence faintings, swoonings of despair,
 And sense of Heaven's desertion.

I was his nursling once, and choice delight,
 His destin'd from the womb,

¹ 'Alp:' used for any lofty hill.

Promis'd by heavenly message twice descending. 635
Under his special eye
Abstemious I grew up, and thriv'd amain ;
He led me on to mightiest deeds,
Above the nerve of mortal arm,
Against the uncircumcis'd, our enemies : 640
But now hath cast me off as never known,
And to those cruel enemies,
Whom I by his appointment had provok'd,
Left me all helpless with the irreparable loss
Of sight, reserv'd alive to be repeated
The subject of their cruelty and scorn.
Nor am I in the list of them that hope ;
Hopeless are all my evils, all remediless :
This one prayer yet remains, might I be heard,
No long petition, speedy death, 650
The close of all my miseries, and the balm.

Cho. Many are the sayings of the wise,
In ancient and in modern books inroll'd,
Extolling patience as the truest fortitude ;
And to the bearing well of all calamities,
All chances incident to man's frail life,
Consolatories writ
With studied argument, and much persuasion sought,
Lenient of grief and anxious thought :
But with the afflicted in his pangs their sound 660
Little prevails, or rather seems a tune
Harsh, and of dissonant mood from his complaint ;
Unless he feel within
Some source of consolation from above,
Secret refreshings, that repair his strength,
And fainting spirits uphold.

God of our fathers, what is man !
That thou towards him with hand so various,

Or might I say contrarious, 669
Temper'st thy providence through his short course,
Not evenly, as thou rul'st
The angelick orders, and inferiour creatures mute,
Irrational and brute.
Nor do I name of men the common rout,
That wandering loose about
Grow up and perish, as the summer-fly,
Heads without name, no more remember'd ;
But such as thou hast solemnly elected,
With gifts and graces eminently adorn'd,
To some great work, thy glory, 680
And people's safety, which in part they effect :
Yet toward these thus dignified, thou oft,
Amidst their highth of noon,
Changest thy countenance, and thy hand, with no regard
Of highest favours past
From thee on them, or them to thee of service.
Nor only dost degrade them, or remit
To life obscur'd, which were a fair dismissal,
But throw'st them lower than thou didst exalt them high ;
Unseemly falls in human eye, 690
Too grievous for the trespass or omission ;
Oft leavest them to the hostile sword
Of heathen and profane, their carcasses
To dogs and fowls a prey, or else captiv'd ;
Or to the unjust tribunals, under change of times,
And condemnation of the ingrateful multitude.
If these they 'scape, perhaps in poverty
With sickness and disease thou bow'st them down,
Painful diseases and deform'd,
In crude old age ; 700
Though not disordinate, yet causeless suffering
The punishment of dissolute days : in fine,

Just, or unjust, alike seem miserable, 703
For oft alike both come to evil end.

So deal not with this once thy glorious champion,
The image of thy strength, and mighty minister.
What do I beg? how hast thou dealt already!
Behold him in this state calamitous, and turn
His labours, for thou canst, to peaceful end.—

But who is this, what thing of sea or land? 710
Female of sex it seems,
That so bedeck'd, ornate, and gay,
Comes this way sailing
Like a stately ship
Of Tarsus, bound for the isles
Of Javan¹ or Gadire²
With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,
Sails fill'd, and streamers waving,
Court'd by all the winds that hold them play,
An amber scent of odorous perfume 720
Her harbinger, a damsel train behind;
Some rich Philistian matron she may seem;
And now at nearer view, no other certain
Than Dalila thy Wife.

Sam. My Wife! my Traitress: let her not come near me.

Cho. Yet on she moves, now stands and eyes thee fix'd,
About to have spoke; but now, with head declin'd,
Like a fair flower surcharg'd with dew, she weeps,
And words address'd seem into tears dissolv'd,
Wetting the borders of her silken veil: 730
But now again she makes address to speak.

Enter DALILA.

Dal. With doubtful feet and wavering resolution
I came, still dreading thy displeasure, Samson,

¹ 'Javan: ' Greece.—² 'Gadire: ' Cadiz.

Which to have merited, without excuse,
 I cannot but acknowledge ; yet, if tears
 May expiate (though the fact more evil drew
 In the perverse event than I foresaw),
 My penance hath not slacken'd, though my pardon
 No way assur'd. But conjugal affection,
 Prevailing over fear and timorous doubt,
 Hath led me on, desirous to behold
 Once more thy face, and know of thy estate,
 If aught in my ability may serve
 To lighten what thou suffer'st, and appease
 Thy mind with what amends is in my power,
 Though late, yet in some part to recompense
 My rash, but more unfortunate, misdeed.

734

740

Sam. Out, out, Hyæna ! these are thy wonted arts,
 And arts of every woman false like thee,
 To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,
 Then as repentant to submit, beseech,
 And reconciliation move with feign'd remorse,
 Confess, and promise wonders in her change ;
 Not truly penitent, but chief to try
 Her husband, how far urg'd his patience bears,
 His virtue or weakness which way to assail :
 Then with more cautious and instructed skill
 Again transgresses, and again submits ;
 That wisest and best men, full oft beguil'd,
 With goodness principled not to reject
 The penitent, but ever to forgive,
 Are drawn to wear out miserable days,
 Entangled with a poisonous bosom snake,
 If not by quick destruction soon cut off,
 As I by thee, to ages an example.

750

760

Dal. Yet hear me, Samson ; not that I endeavour
 To lessen or extenuate my offence ;

But that, on the other side, if it be weigh'd 768
By itself, with aggravations not surcharg'd,
Or else with just allowance counterpois'd,
I may, if possible, thy pardon find
The easier towards me, or thy hatred less.
First granting, as I do, it was a weakness
In me, but incident to all our sex,
Curiosity, inquisitive, impórtune
Of secrets, then with like infirmity
To publish them, both common female faults :
Was it not weakness also to make known
For importunity, that is for nought,
Wherein consisted all thy strength and safety ? 780
To what I did, thou show'dst me first the way.
But I to enemies reveal'd, and should not :
Nor should'st thou have trusted that to woman's frailty :
Ere I to thee, thou to thyself wast cruel.
Let weakness then with weakness come to parle,
So near related, or the same of kind,
Thine forgive mine ; that men may censure thine
The gentler, if severely thou exact not
More strength from me, than in thyself was found.
And what if love, which thou interpret'st hate, 790
The jealousy of love, powerful of sway
In human hearts, nor less in mine towards thee,
Caus'd what I did ? I saw thee mutable
Of fancy, fear'd lest one day thou wouldst leave me
As her at Timna, sought by all means therefore
How to endear, and hold thee to me firmest :
No better way I saw than by impórtuning
To learn thy secrets, get into my power
Thy key of strength and safety : thou wilt say,
Why then reveal'd ? I was assur'd by those 800
Who tempted me, that nothing was design'd

Against thee but safe custody, and hold : 802
That made for me ; I knew that liberty
Would draw thee forth to perilous enterprises,
While I at home sat full of cares and fears,
Wailing thy absence in my widow'd bed ;
Here I should still enjoy thee, day and night,
Mine and love's prisoner, not the Philistines',
Whole to myself, unhazarded abroad,
Fearless at home of partners in my love. 810
These reasons in love's law have pass'd for good,
Though fond and reasonless to some perhaps ;
And love hath oft, well meaning, wrought much woe,
Yet always pity or pardon hath obtain'd.
Be not unlike all others, not austere
As thou art strong, inflexible as steel.
If thou in strength all mortals dost exceed,
In uncompassionate anger do not so.

Sam. How cunningly the sorceress displays
Her own transgressions, to upbraid me mine ! 820
That malice, not repentance, brought thee hither,
By this appears ; I gave, thou say'st, the example,
I led the way ; bitter reproach, but true ;
I to myself was false ere thou to me ;
Such pardon therefore as I give my folly,
Take to thy wicked deed ; which when thou seest
Impartial, self-severe, inexorable,
Thou wilt renounce thy seeking, and much rather
Confess it feign'd : Weakness is thy excuse,
And I believe it ; weakness to resist 830
Philistian gold : If weakness may excuse,
What murderer, what traitor, parricide,
Incestuous, sacrilegious, but may plead it ?
All wickedness is weakness : that plea therefore
With God or Man will gain thee no remission.

But love constrain'd thee ; call it furious rage 836
To satisfy thy lust : love seeks to have love ;
My love how couldst thou hope, who took'st the way
To raise in me inexpiable hate,
Knowing, as needs I must, by thee betray'd ?
In vain thou striv'st to cover shame with shame,
Or by evasions thy crime uncover'st more.

Dal. Since thou determin'st weakness for no plea
In man or woman, though to thy own condemning,
Hear what assaults I had, what snares besides,
What sieges girt me round, ere I consented ;
Which might have aw'd the best-resolv'd of men,
The constantest, to have yielded without blame.
It was not gold, as to my charge thou lay'st, 849
That wrought with me : Thou know'st the magistrates
And princes of my country came in person,
Solicited, commanded, threaten'd, urg'd,
Adjur'd by all the bonds of civil duty
And of religion, press'd how just it was,
How honourable, how glorious, to entrap
A common enemy, who had destroy'd
Such numbers of our nation : and the priest
Was not behind, but ever at my ear,
Preaching how meritorious with the gods
It would be to ensnare an irreligious
Dishonourer of Dagon : what had I 860
To oppose against such powerful arguments ?
Only my love of thee held long debate
And combated in silence all these reasons
With hard contést ; at length that grounded maxim,
So rife and celebrated in the mouths
Of wisest men, that to the public good
Private respects must yield, with grave authority

Took full possession of me, and prevail'd ; 869

Virtue, as I thought, truth, duty, so enjoining.

Sam. I thought where all thy circling wiles would end ;
In feign'd religion—smooth hypocrisy!
But had thy love, still odiously pretended,
Been, as it ought, sincere, it would have taught thee
Far other reasonings, brought forth other deeds.
I, before all the daughters of my tribe
And of my nation, chose thee from among
My enemies, lov'd thee, as too well thou knew'st ;
Too well ; unbosom'd all my secrets to thee,
Not out of levity, but over-power'd 880
By thy request, who could deny thee nothing ;
Yet now am judg'd an enemy. Why then
Didst thou at first receive me for thy husband,
Then, as since then, thy country's foe profess'd ?
Being once a wife, for me thou wast to leave
Parents and country ; nor was I their subject,
Nor under their protection, but my own,
Thou mine, not theirs : If aught against my life
Thy country sought of thee, it sought unjustly,
Against the law of nature, law of nations ; 890
No more thy country, but an impious crew
Of men conspiring to uphold their state
By worse than hostile deeds, violating the ends
For which our country is a name so dear ;
Not therefore to be obey'd. But zeal mov'd thee ;
To please thy gods thou didst it ; gods unable
To acquit themselves and prosecute their foes
But by ungodly deeds, the contradiction
Of their own deity, gods cannot be ;
Less therefore to be pleas'd, obey'd, or fear'd. 900
These false pretexts and varnish'd colours failing,
Bare in thy guilt, how foul must thou appear !

Dal. In argument with men, a woman ever 903
Goes by the worse, whatever be her cause.

Sam. For want of words no doubt, or lack of breath ;
Witness when I was worried with thy peals.

Dal. I was a fool, too rash, and quite mistaken
In what I thought would have succeeded best.
Let me obtain forgiveness of thee, Samson ;
Afford me place to show what recompense 910
Towards thee I intend for what I have misdone,
Misguided ; only what remains past cure
Bear not too sensibly, nor still insist
To afflict thyself in vain : though sight be lost,
Life yet hath many solaces, enjoy'd
Where other senses want not their delights
At home in leisure and domestick ease,
Exempt from many a care and chance to which
Eye-sight exposes daily men abroad.
I to the lords will intercede, not doubting 920
Their favourable ear, that I may fetch thee
From forth this loathsome prison-house, to abide
With me, where my redoubled love and care
With nursing diligence, to me glad office,
May ever tend about thee to old age
With all things grateful cheer'd, and so supplied,
That, what by me thou hast lost, thou least shalt miss.

Sam. No, no ; of my condition take no care ;
It fits not ; thou and I long since are twain :
Nor think me so unwary or accurs'd, 930
To bring my feet again into the snare
Where once I have been caught : I know thy trains,
Though dearly to my cost, thy gins, and toils ;
Thy fair enchanted cup, and warbling charms,
No more on me have power ; their force is null'd ;
So much of adder's wisdom I have learn'd,

To fence my ear against thy sorceries. 937
If in my flower of youth and strength, when all men
Lov'd, honour'd, fear'd me, thou alone couldst hate me
Thy husband, slight me, sell me, and forego me ;
How wouldst thou use me now, blind, and thereby
Deceivable, in most things as a child
Helpless, thence easily contemn'd, and scorn'd,
And last neglected ! How wouldst thou insult,
When I must live uxorious to thy will
In perfect thralldom ; how again betray me,
Bearing my words and doings to the lords
To gloss upon, and, censuring, frown or smile !
This jail I count the house of liberty
To thine, whose doors my feet shall never enter. 950

Dal. Let me approach at least, and touch thy hand.

Sam. Not for thy life, lest fierce remembrance wake
My sudden rage to tear thee joint by joint.
At distance I forgive thee ; go with that ;
Bewail thy falsehood, and the pious works
It hath brought forth to make thee memorable
Among illustrious women, faithful wives !
Cherish thy hasten'd widowhood with the gold
Of matrimonial treason ! so farewell.

Dal. I see-thou art implacable, more deaf 960
To prayers than winds and seas ; yet winds to seas
Are reconcil'd at length, and sea to shore :
Thy anger unappeasable, still rages,
Eternal tempest, never to be calm'd.
Why do I humble thus myself, and, suing
For peace, reap nothing but repulse and hate ;
Bid go with evil omen, and the brand
Of infamy upon my name denounc'd ?
To mix with thy concernments I desist
Henceforth, nor too much disapprove my own.

Fame, if not double-fac'd, is double-mouth'd, 971
And with contráry blast proclaims most deeds;
On both his wings, one black, the other white,
Bears greatest names in his wild aery flight.
My name perhaps among the circumcis'd
In Dan, in Judah, and the bordering tribes,
To all posterity may stand defam'd,
With malediction mention'd, and the blot
Of falsehood most unconjugal traduc'd.
But in my country, where I most desire, 980
In Ecron, Gaza, Asdod, and in Gath,
I shall be nam'd among the famousest
Of women, sung at solemn festivals,
Living and dead recorded, who, to save
Her country from a fierce destroyer, chose
Above the faith of wedlock-bands; my tomb
With odours visited and annual flowers;
Not less renown'd than in Mount Ephraim
Jael, who, with inhospitable guile
Smote Sisera sleeping, through the temples nail'd. 990
Nor shall I count it heinous to enjoy
The public marks of honour and reward,
Conferr'd upon me for the piety
Which to my country I was judg'd to have shown.
At this whoever envies or repines,
I leave him to his lot, and like my own. [Exit.

Cho. She's gone, a manifest serpent by her sting
Discover'd in the end, till now conceal'd.

Sam. So let her go; God sent her to debase me,
And aggravate my folly, who committed 1000
To such a viper his most sacred trust
Of secresy, my safety and my life.

Cho. Yet beauty, though injurious, hath strange power,
After offence returning, to regain

Love once possess'd, nor can be easily 1005
Repuls'd, without much inward passion felt
And secret sting of amorous remorse.

Sam. Love-quarrels oft in pleasing concord end,
Not wedlock-treachery endangering life.

Cho. It is not virtue, wisdom, valour, wit, 1010
Strength, comeliness of shape, or amplest merit,
That woman's love can win or long inherit;
But what it is, hard is to say,
Harder to hit,

(Which way soever men refer it),
Much like thy riddle, Samson, in one day
Or seven, though one should musing sit.

If any of these, or all, the Timnian bride
Had not so soon preferr'd
Thy paranymp¹, worthless to thee compar'd, 1020
Successour in thy bed,
Nor both so loosely disallied
Their nuptials, nor this last so treacherously
Had shorn the fatal harvest of thy head.
Is it for that such outward ornament
Was lavish'd on their sex, that inward gifts
Were left for haste unfinish'd, judgment scant,
Capacity not rais'd to apprehend
Or value what is best

In choice, but ofttest to affect the wrong? 1030
Or was too much of self-love mix'd,
Of constancy no root infix'd,
That either they love nothing, or not long?

Whate'er it be, to wisest men and best
Seeming at first all heavenly under virgin veil,
Soft, modest, meek, demure,
Once join'd, the contrary she proves, a thorn

¹ 'Paranymp:' brideman.

Intestine, far within defensive arms 1038
A cleaving mischief, in his way to virtue
Adverse and turbulent, or by her charms
Draws him awry enslav'd
With dotage, and his sense deprav'd
To folly and shameful deeds which ruin ends.
What pilot so expert but needs must wreck,
Imbark'd with such a steers-mate at the helm !

Favour'd of Heaven, who finds
One virtuous, rarely found,
That in domestick good combines :
Happy that house ! his way to peace is smooth :
But virtue, which breaks through all opposition, 1059
And all temptation can remove,
Most shines, and most is acceptable above.

Therefore God's universal law
Gave to the man despotick power
Over his female in due awe,
Nor from that right to part an hour,
Smile she or lour :
So shall he least confusion draw
On his whole life, not sway'd
By female usurpation, or dismay'd. 1060
But had we best retire ? I see a storm.

Sam. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.

Cho. But this another kind of tempest brings.

Sam. Be less abstruse, my riddling days are past.

Cho. Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear
The bait of honied words ; a rougher tongue
Draws hitherward ; I know him by his stride,
The giant Harapha of Gath, his look
Haughty, as is his pile high-built and proud.
Comes he in peace ? what wind hath blown him hither
I less conjecture than when first I saw

The sumptuous Dalila floating this way : 1072
His habit carries peace, his brow defiance.

Sam. Or peace or not, alike to me he comes.

Cho. His fraught¹ we soon shall know, he now arrives.

Enter HARAPHA.

Har. I come not, Samson, to condole thy chance,
As these perhaps, yet wish it had not been,
Though for no friendly intent. I am of Gath ;
Men call me Harapha, of stock renown'd
As Og, or Anak, and the Emims old 1080
That Kiriathaim² held ; thou know'st me now,
If thou at all art known. Much I have heard
Of thy prodigious might and feats perform'd ;
Incredible to me, in this displeas'd,
That I was never present on the place
Of those encounters, where we might have tried
Each other's force in camp or listed field ;
And now am come to see of whom such noise
Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,
If thy appearance answer loud report. 1090

Sam. The way to know were not to see but taste.

Har. Dost thou already single me ? I thought
Gyves and the mill had tam'd thee. O that fortune
Had brought me to the field, where thou art fam'd
To have wrought such wonders with an ass's jaw !
I should have forc'd thee soon with other arms,
Or left thy carcass where the ass lay thrown :
So had the glory of prowess been recover'd
To Palestine, won by a Philistine,
From the unforeskinn'd race, of whom thou bear'st 1100
The highest name for valiant acts ; that honour,

¹ 'Fraught : ' i. e., freight.—² 'Kiriathaim : ' see Genesis xiv. 5.

Certain to have won by mortal duel from thee, 1102
I lose, prevented by thy eyes put out.

Sam. Boast not of what thou wouldst have done, but do
What then thou wouldst ; thou seest it in thy hand.

Har. To combat with a blind man I disdain,
And thou hast need much washing to be touch'd.

Sam. Such usage as your honourable lords
Afford me, assassinated and betray'd,
Who durst not with their whole united powers 1110
In fight withstand me single and unarm'd,
Nor in the house with chamber-ambushes
Close-banded durst attack me, no, not sleeping,
Till they had hir'd a woman with their gold
Breaking her marriage-faith to circumvent me.
Therefore, without feign'd shifts, let be assign'd
Some narrow place enclos'd, where sight may give thee,
Or rather flight, no great advantage on me ;
Then put on all thy gorgeous arms, thy helmet
And brigandine¹ of brass, thy broad habergeon,² 1120
Vant-brace³ and greves,⁴ and gauntlet, add thy spear,
A weaver's beam, and seven-times-folded shield ;
I only with an oaken staff will meet thee,
And raise such outcries on thy clatter'd iron,
Which long shall not withhold me from thy head,
That in a little time, while breath remains thee,
Thou oft shalt wish thyself at Gath, to boast
Again in safety what thou wouldst have done
To Samson, but shalt never see Gath more.

Har. Thou durst not thus disparage glorious arms,
Which greatest heroes have in battle worn, 1131
Their ornament and safety, had not spells
And black enchantments, some magician's art,

¹ ' Brigandine : ' coat of mail.—² ' Habergeon : ' iron cover for neck.—
³ ' Vant-brace : ' armour for the arms.—⁴ ' Greves : ' armour for legs.

Arm'd thee or charm'd thee strong, which thou from Heaven
Feign'dst at thy birth was given thee in thy hair, 1135
Where strength can least abide, though all thy hairs
Were bristles rang'd like those that ridge the back
Of chaf'd wild boars, or ruffled porcupines.

Sam. I know no spells, use no forbidden arts ;
My trust is in the Living God, who gave me 1140
At my nativity this strength, diffus'd
No less through all my sinews, joints, and bones,
Than thine, while I preserv'd these locks unshorn,
The pledge of my unviolated vow.
For proof hereof, if Dagon be thy God,
Go to his temple, invoke his aid
With solemnest devotion, spread before him
How highly it concerns his glory now
To frustrate and dissolve these magick spells,
Which I to be the power of Israel's God 1150
Avow, and challenge Dagon to the test,
Offering to combat thee his champion bold,
With the utmost of his godhead seconded :
Then thou shalt see, or rather, to thy sorrow,
Soon feel, whose God is strongest, thine or mine.

Har. Presume not on thy God, whate'er he be ;
Thee he regards not, owns not, hath cut off
Quite from his people, and deliver'd up
Into thy enemies' hand, permitted them
To put out both thine eyes, and fetter'd send thee 1160
Into the common prison, there to grind
Among the slaves and asses, thy comrádes,
As good for nothing else ; no better service
With those thy boisterous locks, no worthy match
For valour to assail, nor by the sword
Of noble warriour, so to stain his honour,
But by the barber's razor best subdu'd.

Sam. All these indignities, for such they are 1168
From thine, these evils I deserve, and more,
Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me
Justly, yet despair not of his final pardon,
Whose ear is ever open, and his eye
Gracious to re-admit the suppliant :
In confidence whereof I once again
Defy thee to the trial of mortal fight,
By combat to decide whose God is God,
Thine, or whom I with Israel's sons adore.

Har. Fair honour that thou dost thy God, in trusting
He will accept thee to defend his cause,
A Murderer, a Revolter, and a Robber ! 1180

Sam. Tongue-doughty Giant, how dost thou prove me these ?

Har. Is not thy nation subject to our lords ?
Their magistrates confess'd it when they took thee
As a league-breaker, and deliver'd bound
Into our hands : for hadst thou not committed
Notorious murder on those thirty men
At Ascalon, who never did thee harm ;
Then like a robber stripp'dst them of their robes ?
The Philistines, when thou hadst broke the league,
Went up with armed powers thee only seeking, 1190
To others did no violence nor spoil.

Sam. Among the daughters of the Philistines
I chose a wife, which argu'd me no foe ;
And in your city held my nuptial feast :
But your ill-meaning politician lords,
Under pretence of bridal friends and guests,
Appointed to await me thirty spies,
Who, threatening cruel death, constrain'd the bride
To wring from me, and tell to them, my secret,
That solv'd the riddle which I had propos'd.
When I perceiv'd all set on enmity,

As on my enemies, wherever chanc'd, 1202
 I us'd hostility, and took their spoil,
 To pay my underminers in their coin.
 My nation was subjected to your lords ;
 It was the force of conquest ; force with force
 Is well ejected when the conquer'd can.
 But I, a private person, whom my country
 As a league-breaker gave up bound, presum'd
 Single rebellion, and did hostile acts. 1210
 I was no private, but a person rais'd
 With strength sufficient, and command from Heaven,
 To free my country ; if their servile minds
 Me, their deliverer sent, would not receive,
 But to their masters gave me up for naught,
 The unworthier they ; whence to this day they serve.
 I was to do my part from Heaven assign'd,
 And had perform'd it, if my known offence
 Had not disabled me, not all your force :
 These shifts refuted, answer thy appellant, 1220
 Though by his blindness maim'd for high attempts,
 Who now defies thee thrice to single fight,
 As a petty enterprise of small enforce.

Har. With thee ! a man condemn'd, a slave inroll'd,
 Due by the law to capital punishment !
 To fight with thee no man of arms will deign.

Sam. Cam'st thou for this, vain boaster, to survey me,
 To descant on my strength, and give thy verdict ?
 Come nearer ; part not hence so slight inform'd ;
 But take good heed my hand survey not thee. 1230

Har. O Baal-zebub ! can my ears unus'd
 Hear these dishonours, and not render death ?

Sam. No man withholds thee, nothing from thy hand
 Fear I incurable ; bring up thy van,
 My heels are fetter'd, but my fist is free.

Har. This insolence other kind of answer fits. 1236

Sam. Go, baffled coward ! lest I run upon thee,
Though in these chains, bulk without spirit vast,
And with one buffet lay thy structure low,
Or swing thee in the air, then dash thee down
To the hazard of thy brains and shatter'd sides.

Har. By Ashtaroth, ere long thou shalt lament
These braveries, in irons loaden on thee. [Exit.

Cho. His giantship is gone somewhat crest-fallen,
Stalking with less unconscionable strides,
And lower looks, but in a sultry chafe.

Sam. I dread him not, nor all his giant brood,
Though Fame divulge him father of five sons,
All of gigantick size, Goliah chief.

Cho. He will directly to the lords, I fear, 1250
And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other yet farther to afflict thee.

Sam. He must allege some cause, and offer'd fight
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise
Whether he durst accept the offer or not ;
And, that he durst not, plain enough appear'd.
Much more affliction than already felt
They cannot well impose, nor I sustain ;
If they intend advantage of my labours,
The work of many hands, which earns my keeping,
With no small profit daily to my owners. 1261

But come what will, my deadliest foe will prove
My speediest friend, by death to rid me hence ;
The worst that he can give, to me the best.
Yet so it may fall out, because their end
Is hate, not help to me, it may with mine
Draw their own ruin who attempt the deed.

Cho. Oh how comely it is, and how reviving
To the spirits of just men long oppress'd !

When God into the hands of their deliverer 1270
Puts invincible might
To quell the mighty of the earth, the oppressour,
The brute and boisterous force of violent men,
Hardy and industrious to support
Tyrannick power, but raging to pursue
The righteous and all such as honour truth ;
He all their ammunition
And feats of war defeats,
With plain heroick magnitude of mind
And celestial vigour arm'd ; 1280
Their armouries and magazines contemns,
Renders them useless ; while
With winged expedition,
Swift as the lightning glance, he executes
His errand on the wicked, who, surpris'd,
Lose their defence, distracted and amaz'd.

But patience is more oft the exercise
Of saints, the trial of their fortitude,
Making them each his own deliverer,
And victor over all 1290
That tyranny or fortune can inflict.
Either of these is in thy lot,
Samson, with might endu'd
Above the sons of men ; but sight bereav'd
May chance to number thee with those
Whom patience finally must crown.

This idol's day hath been to thee no day of rest,
Labouring thy mind
More than the working day thy hands.
And yet perhaps more trouble is behind ; 1300
For I descry this way
Some other tending ; in his hand
A scepter or quaint staff he bears,

Comes on amain, speed in his look.
 By his habit I discern him now
 A public officer, and now at hand ;
 His message will be short and voluble.

1304

Enter Officer.

Off. Hebrews, the prisoner Samson here I seek.

Cho. His manacles remark him, there he sits.

Off. Samson, to thee our lords thus bid me say ;
 This day to Dagon is a solemn feast,

1311

With sacrifices, triumph, pomp, and games :

Thy strength they know surpassing human rate,

And now some public proof thereof require

To honour this great feast, and great assembly ;

Rise therefore with all speed, and come along,

Where I will see thee hearten'd, and fresh clad,

To appear, as fits, before the illustrious lords.

Sam. Thou know'st I am an Hebrew, therefore tell them,
 Our Law forbids at their religious rites

1320

My presence ; for that cause I cannot come.

Off. This answer, be assur'd, will not content them.

Sam. Have they not sword-players, and every sort
 Of gymnick¹ artists, wrestlers, riders, runners,

Jugglers, and dancers, anticks, mummers, mimicks,

But they must pick me out, with shackles tir'd,

And over-labour'd at their public mill,

To make them sport with blind activity ?

Do they not seek occasion of new quarrels

On my refusal to distress me more,

1330

Or make a game of my calamities ?

Return the way thou cam'st, I will not come.

Off. Regard thyself ; this will offend them highly.

Sam. Myself ? my conscience, and internal peace.

¹ 'Gymnick : ' i. e., gymnastic.

Can they think me so broken, so debas'd 1335
With corporal servitude, that my mind ever
Will condescend to such absurd commands ?
Although their drudge, to be their fool or jester,
And in my midst of sorrow and heart-grief
To show them feats, and play before their god, 1340
The worst of all indignities, yet on me
Join'd with extreme contempt ? I will not come.

Off. My message was impos'd on me with speed,
Brooks no delay: is this thy resolution ?

Sam. So take it with what speed thy message needs.

Off. I am sorry what this stoutness will produce. [*Exit.*

Sam. Perhaps thou shalt have cause to sorrow indeed.

Cho. Consider, Samson ; matters now are strain'd
Up to the highth, whether to hold or break :
He's gone, and who knows how he may report 1350
Thy words by adding fuel to the flame ?
Expect another message more imperious,
More lordly thundering than thou well wilt bear.

Sam. Shall I abuse this consecrated gift
Of strength, again returning with my hair
After my great transgression ; so requite
Favour renew'd, and add a greater sin
By prostituting holy things to idols ?
A Nazarite in place abominable
Vaunting my strength in honour to their Dagon! 1360
Besides, how vile, contemptible, ridiculous,
What act more execrably unclean, profane ?

Cho. Yet with this strength thou serv'st the Philistines
Idolatrous, uncircumcis'd, unclean.

Sam. Not in their idol-worship, but by labour
Honest and lawful to deserve my food
Of those, who have me in their civil power.

Cho. Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile not.

Sam. Where outward force constrains, the sentence holds:
 But who constrains me to the temple of Dagon, 1370
 Not dragging? the Philistian lords command.
 Commands are no constraints. If I obey them,
 I do it freely, venturing to displease
 God for the fear of man, and man prefer,
 Set God behind: which in his jealousy
 Shall never, unrepented, find forgiveness.
 Yet that he may dispense with me, or thee,
 Present in temples at idolatrous rites
 For some important cause, thou need'st not doubt.

Cho. How thou wilt here come off surmounts my reach.

Sam. Be of good courage; I begin to feel 1381
 Some rousing motions in me, which dispose
 To something extraordinary my thoughts.
 I with this messenger will go along,
 Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonour
 Our Law, or stain my vow of Nazarite.
 If there be aught of presage in the mind,
 This day will be remember'd in my life
 By some great act, or of my days the last.

Cho. In time thou hast resolv'd, the man returns.

Off. Samson, this second message from our lords
 To thee I am bid say. Art thou our slave, 1392
 Our captive, at the public mill our drudge,
 And dar'st thou at our sending and command
 Dispute thy coming? come without delay;
 Or we shall find such engines to assail
 And hamper thee, as thou shalt come of force,
 Though thou wert firmler fasten'd than a rock.

Sam. I could be well content to try their art,
 Which to no few of them would prove pernicious. 1400
 Yet, knowing their advantages too many,
 Because they shall not trail me through their streets

Like a wild beast, I am content to go. 1403
 Masters' commands come with a power resistless
 To such as owe them absolute subjection;
 And for a life who will not change his purpose?
 (So mutable are all the ways of men;)
 Yet this be sure, in nothing to comply
 Scandalous or forbidden in our Law.

Off. I praise thy resolution: doff these links: 1410
 By this compliance thou wilt win the lords
 To favour, and perhaps to set thee free.

Sam. Brethren, farewell; your company along
 I will not wish, lest it perhaps offend them
 To see me girt with friends; and how the sight
 Of me, as of a common enemy,
 So dreaded once, may now exasperate them,
 I know not: lords are lordliest in their wine;
 And the well-feasted priest then soonest fir'd
 With zeal, if aught religion seem concern'd; 1420
 No less the people, on their holy-days,
 Impetuous, insolent, unquenchable:
 Happen what may, of me expect to hear
 Nothing dishonourable, impure, unworthy
 Our God, our Law, my Nation, or myself,
 The last of me or no I cannot warrant.

Cho. Go, and the Holy One
 Of Israel be thy guide
 To what may serve his glory best, and spread his Name
 Great among the Heathen round; 1430
 Send thee the Angel of thy birth, to stand
 Fast by thy side, who from thy father's field
 Rode up in flames after his message told
 Of thy conception, and be now a shield
 Of fire; that Spirit, that first rush'd on thee
 In the camp of Dan,

Be efficacious in thee now at need! 1437
For never was from Heaven imparted
Measure of strength so great to mortal seed,
As in thy wonderous actions hath been seen.—
But wherefore comes old Manoah in such haste
With youthful steps? much livelier than erewhile
He seems; supposing here to find his son,
Or of him bringing to us some glad news?

Enter MANOAH.

Man. Peace with you, Brethren; my inducement hither
Was not at present here to find my son,
By order of the lords now parted hence
To come and play before them at their feast.
I heard all as I came, the city rings,
And numbers thither flock; I had no will, 1450
Lest I should see him forc'd to things unseemly.
But that, which mov'd my coming now, was chiefly
To give ye part with me what hope I have
With good success to work his liberty.

Cho. That hope would much rejoice us to partake
With thee; say, reverend Sire, we thirst to hear.

Man. I have attempted one by one the lords
Either at home, or through the high street passing,
With supplication prone and father's tears,
To accept of ransom for my son their prisoner. 1460
Some much averse I found and wonderous harsh,
Contemptuous, proud, set on revenge and spite;
That part most reverenc'd Dagon and his priests:
Others more moderate seeming, but their aim
Private reward, for which both God and State
They easily would set to sale: a third
More generous far and civil, who confess'd
They had enough reveng'd; having reduc'd

Their foe to misery beneath their fears, 1469
 The rest was magnanimity to remit,
 If some convenient ransom were propos'd.
 What noise or shout was that? it tore the sky.

Cho. Doubtless the people shouting to behold
 Their once great dread, captive, and blind before them,
 Or at some proof of strength before them shown.

Man. His ransom, if my whole inheritance
 May compass it, shall willingly be paid
 And number'd down: much rather I shall choose
 To live the poorest in my tribe, than richest,
 And he in that calamitous prison left. 1480
 No, I am fix'd not to part hence without him.
 For his redemption all my patrimony,
 If need be, I am ready to forego
 And quit: not wanting him, I shall want nothing.

Cho. Fathers are wont to lay up for their sons,
 Thou for thy son art bent to lay out all;
 Sons wont to nurse their parents in old age,
 Thou in old age car'st how to nurse thy son,
 Made older than thy age through eye-sight lost.

Man. It shall be my delight to tend his eyes, 1490
 And view him sitting in the house, ennobled
 With all those high exploits by him achiev'd,
 And on his shoulders waving down those locks
 That of a nation arm'd the strength contain'd:
 And I persuade me, God hath not permitted
 His strength again to grow up with his hair,
 Garrison'd round about him like a camp
 Of faithful soldiery, were not his purpose
 To use him farther yet in some great service;
 Not to sit idle with so great a gift 1500
 Useless, and thence ridiculous about him.

And since his strength with eye-sight was not lost, 1502
God will restore him eye-sight to his strength.

Cho. Thy hopes are not ill-founded, nor seem vain
Of his delivery, and thy joy thereon
Conceiv'd, agreeable to a father's love,
In both which we, as next, participate.

Man. I know your friendly minds, and—O, what noise!—
Mercy of Heaven! what hideous noise was that?
Horribly loud, unlike the former shout. 1510

Cho. Noise call you it, or universal groan,
As if the whole inhabitation perish'd!
Blood, death, and deathful deeds, are in that noise,
Ruin, destruction at the utmost point.

Man. Of ruin indeed methought I heard the noise:
Oh! it continues, they have slain my son.

Cho. Thy son is rather slaying them; that outcry
From slaughter of one foe could not ascend.

Man. Some dismal accident it needs must be;
What shall we do, stay here or run and see? 1520

Cho. Best keep together here, lest, running thither,
We unawares run into danger's mouth.
This evil on the Philistines is fallen;
From whom could else a general cry be heard?
The sufferers then will scarce molest us here;
From other hands we need not much to fear.
What if, his eye-sight (for to Israel's God
Nothing is hard) by miracle restor'd,
He now be dealing dole among his foes,
And over heaps of slaughter'd walk his way? 1530

Man. That were a joy presumptuous to be thought.

Cho. Yet God hath wrought things as incredible
For his people of old; what hinders now?

Man. He can, I know, but doubt to think he will;

Yet hope would fain subscribe, and tempts belief. 1535
A little stay will bring some notice hither.

Cho. Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner;
For evil news rides post, while good news bates.
And to our wish I see one hither speeding,
An Hebrew, as I guess, and of our tribe. 1540

Enter Messenger.

Mess. O whither shall I run, or which way fly
The sight of this so horrid spectacle,
Which erst my eyes beheld, and yet behold?
For dire imagination still pursues me.
But providence or instinct of nature seems,
Or reason, though disturb'd, and scarce consulted,
To have guided me aright, I know not how,
To thee first, reverend Manoah, and to these
My countrymen, whom here I knew remaining,
As at some distance from the place of horror, 1550
So in the sad event too much concern'd.

Man. The accident was loud, and here before thee
With rueful cry, yet what it was we hear not;
No preface needs, thou seest we long to know.

Mess. It would burst forth, but I recover breath
And sense distract, to know well what I utter.

Man. Tell us the sum, the circumstance defer.

Mess. Gaza yet stands, but all her sons are fallen,
All in a moment overwhelm'd and fall'n.

Man. Sad, but thou know'st to Israelites not saddest
The desolation of a hostile city. 1561

Mess. Feed on that first, there may in grief be surfeit.

Man. Relate by whom.

Mess. By Samson.

Man. That still lessens
The sorrow, and converts it nigh to joy.

Mess. Ah! Manoah, I refrain too suddenly 1567
To utter what will come at last too soon ;
Lest evil tidings with too rude irruption
Hitting thy aged ear should pierce too deep.

Man. Suspense in news is torture, speak them out.

Mess. Take then the worst in brief,—Samson is dead!

Man. The worst indeed! O all my hopes defeated
To free him hence! but death, who sets all free,
Hath paid his ransom now and full discharge.
What windy joy this day had I conceiv'd
Hopeful of his delivery, which now proves
Abortive as the first-born bloom of spring
Nipt with the lagging rear of winter's frost!
Yet ere I give the reins to grief, say first, 1586
How died he; death to life is crown or shame.
All by him fell, thou say'st; by whom fell he?
What glorious hand gave Samson his death's wound?

Mess. Unwounded of his enemies he fell.

Man. Wearied with slaughter then, or how? explain.

Mess. By his own hands.

Man. Self-violence? what cause
Brought him so soon at variance with himself
Among his foes?

Mess. Inevitable cause 1590
At once both to destroy and be destroy'd;
The edifice, where all were met to see him,
Upon their heads and on his own he pull'd.

Man. O lastly over-strong against thyself!
A dreadful way thou took'st to thy revenge.
More than enough we know; but while things yet
Are in confusion, give us, if thou canst,
Eye-witness of what first or last was done,
Relation more particular and distinct.

Mess. Occasions drew me early to this city;

And, as the gates I enter'd with sun-rise, 1601
The morning trumpets festival proclaim'd
Through each high street : little had I dispatch'd,
When all abroad was rumour'd that this day
Samson should be brought forth, to show the people
Proof of his mighty strength in feats and games ;
I sorrow'd at his captive state, but minded
Not to be absent at that spectacle.
The building was a spacious theater
Half-round, on two main pillars vaulted high, 1610
With seats where all the lords, and each degree
Of sort, might sit in order to behold ;
The other side was open, where the throng
On banks and scaffolds under sky might stand ;
I among these aloof obscurely stood.
The feast and noon grew high, and sacrifice
Had fill'd their hearts with mirth, high cheer, and wine,
When to their sports they turn'd. Immediately
Was Samson as a public servant brought,
In their state livery clad ; before him pipes 1620
And timbrels, on each side went armed guards,
Both horse and foot, before him and behind
Archers, and slingers, cataphracts,¹ and spears.
At sight of him the people with a shout
Rifted the air, clamouring their god with praise,
Who had made their dreadful enemy their thrall.
He patient, but undaunted, where they led him,
Came to the place ; and what was set before him,
Which without help of eye might be assay'd,
To heave, pull, draw, or break, he still perform'd 1630
All with incredible, stupendous force :
None daring to appear antagonist.
At length for intermission sake they led him

¹ ' Cataphracts : ' i. e., men and horses in armour.

Between the pillars ; he his guide requested 1634
(For so from such as nearer stood we heard)
As over-tir'd to let him lean awhile
With both his arms on those two massy pillars,
That to the arched roof gave main support.
He, unsuspecting, led him ; which when Samson
Felt in his arms, with head awhile inclin'd, 1640
And eyes fast fix'd, he stood, as one who pray'd,
Or some great matter in his mind revolv'd ;
At last with head erect thus cried aloud ;
“ Hitherto, Lords, what your commands impos'd
I have perform'd, as reason was, obeying,
Not without wonder or delight beheld :
Now of my own accord, such other trial
I mean to show you of my strength, yet greater,
As with amaze shall strike all who behold.”
This utter'd, straining all his nerves he bow'd ; 1650
As with the force of winds and waters pent,
When mountains tremble, those two massy pillars
With horrible convulsion to and fro
He tugg'd, he shook, till down they came, and drew
The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder
Upon the heads of all who sat beneath,
Lords, ladies, captains, counsellors, or priests,
Their choice nobility and flower, not only
Of this but each Philistian city round,
Met from all parts to solemnise this feast. 1660
Samson, with these immix'd, inevitably
Pull'd down the same destruction on himself ;
The vulgar only 'scaped who stood without.

Cho. O dearly-bought revenge, yet glorious !
Living or dying thou hast fulfill'd
The work for which thou wast foretold
To Israel, and now ly'st victorious

Among thy slain self-kill'd, 1668
 Not willingly, but tangled in the fold
 Of dire necessity, whose law in death conjoin'd
 Thee with thy slaughter'd foes, in number more
 Than all thy life hath slain before.

1st Semichor. While their hearts were jocund and sublime.
 Drunk with idolatry, drunk with wine,
 And fat regorg'd of bulls and goats,
 Chaunting their idol, and preferring
 Before our Living Dread who dwells
 In Silo,¹ his bright sanctuary :
 Among them he a Spirit of phrenzy sent,
 Who hurt their minds, 1680
 And urg'd them on with mad desire,
 To call in haste for their destroyer ;
 They, only set on sport and play,
 Unweetingly importun'd
 Their own destruction to come speedy upon them.
 So fond are mortal men,
 Fallen into wrath divine,
 As their own ruin on themselves to invite,
 Insensate left, or to sense reprobate,
 And with blindness internal struck. 1690

2d Semichor. But he, though blind of sight,
 Despis'd and thought extinguish'd quite,
 With inward eyes illuminated,
 His fiery virtue rous'd
 From under ashes into sudden flame,
 And as an evening dragon came,
 Assailant on the perched roosts
 And nests in order rang'd
 Of tame villatick fowl ; but as an eagle
 His cloudless thunder bolted on their heads.

¹ ' Silo : ' Shiloh, where the ark and tabernacle then were.

So Virtue, given for lost, 1701
 Depress'd, and overthrown, as seem'd,
 Like that self-begotten bird¹
 In the Arabian woods embost,²
 That no second knows nor third,
 And lay ere while a holocaust,³
 From out her ashy womb now teem'd,
 Revives, reflourishes, then vigorous most
 When most unactive deem'd ;
 And, though her body die, her fame survives 1710
 A secular⁴ bird, ages of lives.

Man. Come, come ; no time for lamentation now,
 Nor much more cause ; Samson hath quit himself
 Like Samson, and heroickly hath finish'd
 A life heroick ; on his enemies
 Fully reveng'd, hath left them years of mourning,
 And lamentation to the sons of Caphtor⁵
 Through all Philistian bounds ; to Israel
 Honour hath left, and freedom, let but them
 Find courage to lay hold on this occasion ; 1720
 To himself and father's house eternal fame ;
 And, which is best and happiest yet, all this
 With God not parted from him, as was fear'd,
 But favouring and assisting to the end.
 Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
 Or knock the breast ; no weakness, no contempt,
 Dispraise, or blame ; nothing but well and fair,
 And what may quiet us in a death so noble.
 Let us go find the body where it lies
 Soak'd in his enemies' blood ; and from the stream 1730
 With lavers pure, and cleansing herbs, wash off

¹ 'Bird:' phoenix. — ² 'Embost:' enclosed. — ³ 'Holocaust:' an entire burnt-offering. — ⁴ 'Secular:' *i. e.*, living a thousand years. — ⁵ 'Caphtor,' or Crete: whence the Philistines originally came.

The clotted gore. I, with what speed the while 1732
 (Gaza is not in plight to say us nay),
 Will send for all my kindred, all my friends,
 To fetch him hence, and solemnly attend
 With silent obsequy, and funeral train,
 Home to his father's house : there will I build him
 A monument, and plant it round with shade
 Of laurel ever green, and branching palm,
 With all his trophies hung, and acts inroll'd 1740
 In copious legend, or sweet lyrick song.
 Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,
 And from his memory inflame their breasts
 To matchless valour, and adventures high :
 The virgins also shall, on feastful days,
 Visit his tomb with flowers ; only bewailing
 His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,
 From whence captivity and loss of eyes.

Cho. All is best, though we oft doubt
 What the unsearchable dispose 1750
 Of Highest Wisdom brings about,
 And ever best found in the close.
 Oft He seems to hide his face,
 But unexpectedly returns,
 And to his faithful champion hath in place
 Bore witness gloriously ; whence Gaza mourns,
 And all that band them to resist
 His uncontrollable intent :
 His servants He, with new acquist¹
 Of true experience, from this great event 1760
 With peace and consolation hath dismiss,
 And calm of mind all passion spent.

¹ 'Acquist : ' acquisition.

COMUS:

A Mask.

PRESENTED AT LUDLOW CASTLE, 1634, BEFORE JOHN, EARL OF
BRIDGEWATER,¹ THEN PRESIDENT OF WALES.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN LORD VISCOUNT BRACKLEY,²

SON AND HEIR APPARENT TO THE EARL OF BRIDGEWATER, ETC.

MY LORD,

This poem, which received its first occasion of birth from yourself and others of your noble family, and much honour from your own person in the performance, now returns again to make a final dedication of itself to you. Although not openly acknowledged³ by the author, yet it is a legitimate offspring, so lovely, and so much desired, that the often copying of it hath tired my pen to give my several friends satisfaction, and brought me to a necessity of producing it to the public view; and now to offer it up in all rightful devotion to those fair hopes, and rare endowments of your much promising youth, which give a full assurance, to all that know you, of a future excellence. Live, sweet Lord, to be the honour of your name, and receive this as your own, from the hands of him, who hath by many favours been long obliged to your most honoured parents, and as in this representation your attendant *Thyrsis*, so now in all real expression,

Your faithful and most humble Servant,

H. LAWES.⁴

¹ 'John Earl of Bridgewater,' before whom *Comus* was first presented, and whose sons and daughter performed the characters of the Brothers and the Lady. It is said that the latter had been benighted in Haywood Forest, and that Milton founded *Comus* on this incident. Earl John died 1649. He was a royalist.

² 'Lord Brackley:' he became Earl of Bridgewater, and died in 1686.

³ 'Not openly acknowledged' till 1645.

⁴ 'H. Lawes:' a celebrated musician, who composed the music for *Comus*. He was an amiable man, and, though a royalist, an intimate friend of Milton's, who dedicated to him his 13th Sonnet. He composed an immense variety of sacred and other music.

COMUS.

THE PERSONS.

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT, *after-*
wards in the habit of THYRSIS.
COMUS, *with his Crew.*
THE LADY.

FIRST BROTHER.
SECOND BROTHER.
SABRINA, *the Nymph.*

THE CHIEF PERSONS, WHO PRESENTED, WERE

THE LORD BRACKLEY.
MR THOMAS EGERTON,¹ *his brother.*
THE LADY ALICE EGERTON.²

The first Scene discovers a wild Wood.

The ATTENDANT SPIRIT descends or enters.

BEFORE the starry threshold of Jove's court
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright æreal spirits live inspher'd
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot,
Which men call Earth ; and, with low-thoughted care
Confin'd and pester'd³ in this pinfold⁴ here,
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindful of the crown that Virtue gives,
After this mortal change, to her true servants,
Amongst the enthron'd gods on sainted seats,
Yet some there be, that by due steps aspire

10

¹ 'Thomas Egerton:' the fourth son of the Earl. He died at the age of twenty-three.—² 'The Lady Alice,' as her portraits testify, was very beautiful. She became the Countess of Carbery.—³ 'Pester'd:' i. e., crowded.—⁴ 'Pinfold:' i. e., sheepfold.

To lay their just hands on that golden key, 13
 That opes the palace of Eternity:
 To such my errand is ; and, but for such,
 I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds
 With the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould.

But to my task. Neptune, besides the sway
 Of every salt flood, and each ebbing stream,
 Took in by lot 'twixt high and nether¹ Jove 20
 Imperial rule of all the sea-girt isles,
 That, like to rich and various gems, inlay
 The unadorned bosom of the deep :
 Which he, to grace his tributary gods,
 By course commits to several government,
 And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns,
 And wield their little tridents : But this Isle,
 The greatest and the best of all the main,
 He quarters to his blue-hair'd deities ;
 And all this tract that fronts the falling sun 30
 A noble Peer¹ of mickle trust and power
 Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide
 An old and haughty nation, proud in arms :
 Where his fair offspring, nurs'd in princely lore,
 Are coming to attend their father's state,
 And new-entrusted scepter : but their way
 Lies through the perplex'd paths of this drear wood,
 The nodding horror of whose shady brows
 Threats the forlorn and wandering passenger ;
 And here their tender age might suffer peril, 40
 But that by quick command from sovran Jove
 I was dispatch'd for their defence and guard :
 And listen why ; for I will tell you now

¹ 'High and nether : ' i. e., the upper and the lower dominions of Jove.—

² 'Peer : ' Earl of Bridgewater, then President of Wales and the Marches.

What never yet was heard in tale or song, 44
From old or modern bard, in hall or bower.

Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
Crush'd the sweet poison of misused wine,
After the Tuscan mariners¹ transform'd,
Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,
On Circe's island fell : (Who knows not Circe,² 50
The daughter of the Sun, whose charmed cup
Whoever tasted lost his upright shape,
And downward fell into a grovelling swine?)
This Nymph, that gaz'd upon his clustering locks
With ivy berries wreath'd, and his blithe youth,
Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son
Much like his father, but his mother more,
Whom therefore she brought up, and Comus nam'd :
Who, ripe and frolic of his full-grown age,
Roving the Celtick and Iberian³ fields, 60
At last betakes him to this ominous wood ;
And in thick shelter of black shades imbower'd
Excels his mother at her mighty art,
Offering to every weary traveller
His orient liquour in a crystal glass,
To quench the drouth of Phœbus ; which as they taste
(For most do taste through fond intemperate thirst),
Soon as the potion works, their human countenance,
The express resemblance of the gods, is chang'd
Into some brutish form of wolf, or bear ; 70
Or ounce, or tiger, hog, or bearded goat,
All other parts remaining as they were ;
And they, so perfect is their misery,
Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
But boast themselves more comely than before ;

¹ 'Tuscan mariners : ' changed into beasts ; see Ovid, Met. lib. iii.—

² 'Circe : ' see the Odyssey.—³ 'Celtick and Iberian : ' France and Spain.

And all their friends and native home forget, 76
 To roll with pleasure in a sensual styè.
 Therefore when any, favour'd of high Jove,
 Chances to pass through this adventurous glade,
 Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star
 I shoot from Heaven to give him safe convoy,
 As now I do : But first I must put off
 These my sky robes spun out of Iris' woof,
 And take the weeds and likeness of a swain¹
 That to the service of this house belongs,
 Who with his soft pipe, and smooth-dittied song,
 Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
 And hush the waving woods ; nor of less faith,
 And in this office of his mountain watch
 Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid 90
 Of this occasion. But I hear the tread
 Of hateful steps ; I must be viewless now.

*Enter COMUS, with a charming rod in one hand, his
 glass in the other ; with him a rout of monsters,
 headed like sundry sorts of wild beasts, but other-
 wise like men and women, their apparel glistering ;
 they come in making a riotous and unruly noise,
 with torches in their hands.*

Comus. The star that bids the shepherd fold,
 Now the top of heaven doth hold ;
 And the gilded car of day
 His glowing axle doth allay
 In the steep Atlantick stream ;
 And the slope sun his upward beam
 Shoots against the dusky pole,
 Pacing toward the other goal 100
 Of his chamber in the East.

¹ 'Swain : ' Lawes is here meant, who enacted the Spirit.

Meanwhile welcome Joy, and Feast, 102
 Midnight Shout, and Revelry,
 Tipsy Dance, and Jollity.
 Braid your locks with rosy twine,
 Dropping odours, dropping wine.
 Rigour now is gone to bed,
 And Advice with scrupulous head.
 Strict Age and sour Severity,
 With their grave saws, in slumber lie. 110
 We that are of purer fire,
 Imitate the starry quire,
 Who, in their nightly watchful spheres,
 Lead in swift round the months and years.
 The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,
 Now to the moon in wavering morrice¹ move ;
 And, on the tawny sands and shelves,
 Trip the pert faëries and the dapper elves.
 By dimpled brook and fountain-brim,
 The Wood-Nymphs, deck'd with daisies trim, 120
 Their merry wakes and pastimes keep ;
 What hath Night to do with Sleep ?²
 Night hath better sweets to prove ;
 Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.
 Come, let us our rites begin ;
 'Tis only day-light that makes sin,
 Which these dun shades will ne'er report.—
 Hail, Goddess of nocturnal sport,
 Dark-veil'd Cotytto !³ to whom the secret flame
 Of midnight torches burns ; mysterious dame, 130
 That ne'er art call'd, but when the dragon woom
 Of Stygian darkness spits her thickest gloom,

¹ 'Morrice:' or Moorish dance.—² 'Night to do with sleep:' Byron imitates this in his 'Most Glorious Night! Thou wert not sent for slumber.'—

³ 'Cotytto:' goddess of wantonness.

And makes one blot of all the air ; 133
 Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
 Wherein thou rid'st with Hecat',¹ and befriend
 Us thy vow'd priests, till utmost end
 Of all thy dues be done, and none left out ;
 Ere the blabbing eastern scout,
 The nice Morn, on the Indian steep
 From her cabin'd loop-hole peep, 140
 And to the tell-tale sun descry
 Our conceal'd solemnity.—
 Come, knit hands, and beat the ground
 In a light fantastick round.

THE MEASURE.

Break off, break off, I feel the different pace
 Of some chaste footing near about this ground.
 Run to your shrouds, within these brakes and trees ;
 Our number may affright : Some virgin sure
 (For so I can distinguish by mine art)
 Benighted in these woods. Now to my charms, 150
 And to my wily trains ; I shall ere long
 Be well stock'd with as fair a herd as graz'd
 About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl
 My dazzling spells into the spongy air,
 Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
 And give it false presentments, lest the place
 And my quaint habits breed astonishment,
 And put the damsel to suspicious flight ;
 Which must not be, for that's against my course :
 I, under fair pretence of friendly ends, 160
 And well-plac'd words of glozing courtesy
 Baited with reasons not unplaussible,
 Wind me into the easy-hearted man,

¹ 'Hecat' : the witch-goddess.

And hug him into snares. When once her eye 164
 Hath met the virtue of this magick dust,
 I shall appear some harmless villager,
 Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
 But here she comes ; I fairly step aside,
 And hearken, if I may, her business here.

Enter THE LADY.

Lady. This way the noise was, if mine ear be true,
 My best guide now : Methought it was the sound 171
 Of riot and ill-manag'd merriment,
 Such as the jocund flute, or gamesome pipe,
 Stirs up among the loose unletter'd hinds ;
 When for their teeming flocks, and granges full,
 In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,
 And thank the gods amiss. I should be loth
 To meet the rudeness, and swill'd insolence,
 Of such late wassailers ; yet O ! where else
 Shall I inform my unacquainted feet 180
 In the blind mazes of this tangled wood ?
 My Brothers, when they saw me wearied out
 With this long way, resolving here to lodge
 Under the spreading favour of these pines,
 Stept, as they said, to the next thicket-side,
 To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit
 As the kind hospitable woods provide.
 They left me then when the gray-hooded Even,
 Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
 Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain. 190
 But where they are, and why they came not back,
 Is now the labour of my thoughts ; 'tis likeliest
 They had engag'd their wandering steps too far ;
 And envious darkness, ere they could return,
 Had stole them from me : else, O thievish Night,

Why shouldst thou, but for some-felonious end, 196
 In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars,
 That Nature hung in Heaven, and fill'd their lamps
 With everlasting oil, to give due light
 To the misled and lonely traveller?

This is the place, as well as I may guess,
 Whence even now the tumult of loud mirth
 Was rife, and perfect in my listening ear;
 Yet nought but single darkness do I find.
 What might this be? A thousand fantasies
 Begin to throng into my memory,
 Of calling shapes, and beckoning shadows dire,
 And aery tongues that syllable men's names
 On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses.

These thoughts may startle well, but not astound, 210
 The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
 By a strong siding champion, Conscience.—
 O welcome, pure-ey'd Faith; white-handed Hope,
 Thou hovering Angel, girt with golden wings;
 And thou, unblemish'd form of Chastity!

I see ye visibly, and now believe
 That He, the Súpreme Good, to whom all things ill
 Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
 Would send a glistering guardian, if need were,
 To keep my life and honour unassail'd. 220

Was I deceiv'd, or did a sable cloud
 Turn forth her silver lining on the night?
 I did not err, there does a sable cloud
 Turn forth her silver lining on the night,
 And casts a gleam over this tufted grove:
 I cannot halloo to my Brothers, but
 Such noise as I can make to be heard farthest
 I'll venture; for my new-enliven'd spirits
 Prompt me; and they perhaps are not far off.

* SONG.

Sweet Echo, sweetest Nymph, that liv'st unseen 230
 Within thy aery shell,¹
 By slow Meander's margent green,
 And in the violet-embroider'd vale,
 Where the love-lorn nightingale
 Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well ;
 Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
 That likest thy Narcissus are ?
 O, if thou have
 Hid them in some flowery cave,
 Tell me but where, 240
 Sweet queen of parley, daughter of the sphere !
 So may'st thou be translated to the skies,
 And give² resounding grace to all Heaven's harmonies.

Enter COMUS.

Comus. Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
 Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment ?
 Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
 And with these raptures moves the vocal air
 To testify his hidden residence.
 How sweetly did they float upon the wings
 Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night, 250
 At every fall smoothing the raven-down
 Of darkness, till it smil'd ! I have oft heard
 My mother Circe with the Syrens three,
 Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades,
 Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs ;
 Who, as they sung, would take the prison'd soul,
 And lap it in Elysium : Scylla³ wept,

¹ 'Shell : ' the horizon.—² 'Give,' &c. : what an exquisite fancy this of echo in heaven redoubling the divine music!—³ 'Scylla' and 'Charybdis : ' the two famous opposing whirlpools.

And chid her barking waves into attention, 258
 And fell Charybdis murmur'd soft applause :
 Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense,
 And in sweet madness robb'd it of itself ;
 But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
 Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
 I never heard till now.—I'll speak to her,
 And she shall be my queen.—Hail, foreign wonder !
 Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,
 Unless the goddess that in rural shrine
 Dwell'st here with Pan, or Sylvan ; by blest song
 Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog
 To touch the prosperous growth of this tall wood. 270

Lady. Nay, gentle shepherd, ill is lost that praise,
 That is address'd to unattending ears ;
 Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
 How to regain my sever'd company,
 Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo
 To give me answer from her mossy couch.

Comus. What chance, good lady, hath bereft you thus ?

Lady. Dim darkness, and this leafy labyrinth.

Comus. Could that divide you from near-ushering guides ?

Lady. They left me weary on a grassy turf. 280

Comus. By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why ?

Lady. To seek i' the valley some cool friendly spring.

Comus. And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady ?

Lady. They were but twain, and purpos'd quick return.

Comus. Perhaps forestalling night prevented them.

Lady. How easy my misfortune is to hit !

Comus. Imports their loss, besides the present need ?

Lady. No less than if I should my Brothers lose.

Comus. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom ?

Lady. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips. 290

Comus. Two such I saw, what time the labour'd ox

In his loose traces from the furrow came, 292
 And the swink'd¹ hedger at his supper sat ;
 I saw them under a green mantling vine,
 That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
 Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots ;
 Their port was more than human, as they stood :
 I took it for a faery vision
 Of some gay creatures of the element,
 That in the colours of the rainbow live, 300
 And play i' the plighted² clouds. I was aw-struck,
 And, as I past, I worshipt ; if those you seek,
 It were a journey like the path to Heaven,
 To help you find them.

Lady.

Gentle Villager,

What readiest way would bring me to that place ?

Comus. Due west it rises from this shrubby point.

Lady. To find out that, good Shepherd, I suppose,
 In such a scant allowance of star-light,
 Would overtask the best land-pilot's art, 310
 Without the sure guess of well-practis'd feet.

Comus. I know each lane, and every alley green,
 Dingle,³ or bushy dell of this wild wood,
 And every bosky bourn⁴ from side to side,
 My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood ;
 And if your stray attendants be yet lodg'd,
 Or shroud within these limits, I shall know
 Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark
 From her thatch'd pallet rouse ; if otherwise,
 I can conduct you, Lady, to a low 320
 But loyal cottage, where you may be safe
 Till farther quest.

¹ 'Swink'd : ' tired. — ² 'Plighted : ' i. e., plaited or braided. — ³ 'Dingle : ' a valley between two steep hills. — ⁴ 'Bosky bourn : ' a bushy valley with a rivulet.

Lady. Shepherd, I take thy word, 323
 And trust thy honest offer'd courtesy,
 Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds
 With smoky rafters, than in tap'stry halls
 In courts of princes, where it first was nam'd,
 And yet is most pretended: In a place
 Less warranted than this, or less secure,
 I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.— 330
 Eye me, blest Providence, and square my trial
 To my proportion'd strength!—Shepherd, lead on. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter THE TWO BROTHERS.

First B. Unmuffle, ye faint stars; and thou, fair moon,
 That wont'st to love the traveller's benison,
 Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
 And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
 In double night of darkness and of shades;
 Or, if your influence be quite damm'd up
 With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,
 Though a rush-candle from the wicker hole 340
 Of some clay habitation, visit us
 With thy long-levell'd rule of streaming light;
 And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,¹
 Or Tyrian Cynosure.

Sec. B. Or, if our eyes
 Be barr'd that happiness, might we but hear
 The folded flocks penn'd in their wattled cotes,
 Or sound of pastoral reed with oaten stops,
 Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock
 Count the night watches to his feathery dames, 350
 'Twould be some solace yet, some little cheering,

¹ 'Arcady,' &c. : it was fabled that Calisto, daughter of the King of Arcadia, was turned into the Greater Bear, by which the Greeks steer their course; and her son Arcas into the Lesser, called Cynosura, by which the Tyrians steer theirs.

In this close dungeon of innumerable boughs. 352
 But, O that hapless virgin, our lost Sister !
 Where may she wander now, whither betake her
 From the chill dew, among rude burs and thistles ?
 Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
 Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm
 Leans her unpillow'd head, fraught with sad fears.
 What, if in wild amazement and affright ?
 Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp 360
 Of savage hunger, or of savage heat ?

First B. Peace, Brother ; be not over-exquisite
 To cast the fashion¹ of uncertain evils :
 For grant they be so, while they rest unknown,
 What need a man forestall his date of grief,
 And run to meet what he would most avoid ?
 Or if they be but false alarms of fear,
 How bitter is such self-delusion !
 I do not think my Sister so to seek,
 Or so unprincipled in Virtue's book, 370
 And the sweet peace that goodness bosoms ever,
 As that the single want of light and noise
 (Not being in danger, as I trust she is not)
 Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,
 And put them into misbecoming plight.
 Virtue could see to do what Virtue would
 By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
 Were in the flat sea sunk. And Wisdom's self
 Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude ;
 Where, with her best nurse, Contemplation, 380
 She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
 That in the various bustle of resort
 Were all-to ruffled, and sometimes impair'd.
 He that has light within his own clear breast,

¹ ' Cast the fashion : ' i. e., predict.—² ' All-to : ' old word for entirely.

May sit i' the center, and enjoy bright day : 385
 But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,
 Benighted walks under the mid-day sun ;
 Himself is his own dungeon.

Sec. B. 'Tis most true,
 That musing Meditation most affects 390
 The pensive secrecy of desert cell,
 Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds,
 And sits as safe as in a senate house ;
 For who would rob a hermit of his weeds,
 His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,
 Or do his gray hairs any violence ?
 But Beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree
 Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
 Of dragon-watch with unenchanted eye,
 To save her blossoms and defend her fruit, 400
 From the rash hand of bold Incontinence.
 You may as well spread out the unsunn'd heaps
 Of miser's treasure by an outlaw's den,
 And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope
 Danger will wink on opportunity,
 And let a single helpless maiden pass
 Uninjur'd in this wild surrounding waste.
 Of night, or loneliness, it recks me not ;
 I fear the dread events that dog them both,
 Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the person 410
 Of our unowned Sister.

First B. I do not, Brother,
 Infer, as if I thought my Sister's state
 Secure, without all doubt or controversy ;
 Yet, where an equal poise of hope and fear
 Does arbitrate the event, my nature is
 That I incline to hope, rather than fear,
 And gladly banish squint suspicion.

My Sister is not so defenceless left
As you imagine; she has a hidden strength,
Which you remember not.

419

Sec. B. What hidden strength,
Unless the strength of Heaven, if you mean that?

First B. I mean that too, but yet a hidden strength,
Which, if Heaven gave it, may be term'd her own:

'Tis Chastity, my Brother, Chastity:

She, that has that, is clad in complete steel;

And, like a quiver'd Nymph with arrows keen,
May trace huge forests, and unharbour'd heaths,

Infamous¹ hills, and sandy perilous wilds;

430

Where, through the sacred rays of Chastity,

No savage fierce, bandite, or mountaineer,

Will dare to soil her virgin purity:

Yea there, where very Desolation dwells,

By grotts and caverns shagg'd with horrid shades,

She may pass on with unblench'd majesty,

Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.

Some say, no evil thing that walks by night

In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,

Blue meager hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost

440

That breaks his magic chains at Curfeu time,

No goblin, or swart faery of the mine,

Hath hurtful power o'er true Virginity.

Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call

Antiquity from the old schools of Greece

To testify the arms of Chastity?

Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,

Fair silver-shafted queen, for ever chaste,

Wherewith she tam'd the brinded lioness

And spotted mountain pard, but set at naught

450

The frivolous bolt of Cupid; gods and men

Fear'd her stern frown, and she was queen o' the woods.

¹ 'Infamous:' unknown to fame.

What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield, 453
That wise Minerva wore, unconquer'd virgin,
Wherewith she freez'd her foes to congeal'd stone,
But rigid looks of chaste austerity,
And noble grace, that dash'd brute violence
With sudden adoration and blank awe ?
So dear to Heaven is saintly Chastity,
That, when a soul is found sincerely so, 460
A thousand liveried angels lackey her,
Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt;
And, in clear dream and solemn vision
Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear ;
Till oft converse with heavenly habitants
Begin to cast a beam on the outward shape,
The unpolluted temple of the mind,
And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,
Till all be made immortal : But when Lust,
By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk, 470
But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
The soul grows clotted by contagion,
Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose
The divine property of her first being.
Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp,
Oft seen in charnel vaults and sepulchres
Lingering, and sitting by a new made grave,
As loth to leave the body that it lov'd,
And link'd itself by carnal sensuality 480
To a degenerate and degraded state.

Sec. B. How charming is divine Philosophy!
Not harsh, and crabbed, as dull fools suppose ;
But musical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns.

First B. List, list ; I hear 487
Some far-off halloo break the silent air.

Sec. B. Methought so too ; what should it be ?

First B. For certain
Either some one like us night-founder'd here,
Or else some neighbour woodman, or at worst,
Some roving robber calling to his fellows.

Sec. B. Heaven keep my sister. Again, again, and near!
Best draw, and stand upon our guard.

First B. I'll halloo :
If he be friendly, he comes well ; if not,
Defence is a good cause, and Heaven be for us.

Enter the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, habited like a Shepherd.
That halloo I should know ; what are you ? speak ;
Come not too near, you fall on iron stakes else. 500

Spi. What voice is that ? my young lord ? speak again.

Sec. B. O Brother, 'tis my father's shepherd, sure.

First B. Thyrsis ? Whose artful strains have oft delay'd
The huddling brook to hear his madrigal,
And sweeten'd every muskrose of the dale ?
How cam'st thou here, good swain ? hath any ram
Slipt from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,
Or straggling wether the pent flock forsook ?
How couldst thou find this dark sequester'd nook ?

Spi. O my lov'd master's heir, and his next joy, 510
I came not here on such a trivial toy
As a stray'd ewe, or to pursue the stealth
Of pilfering wolf ; not all the fleecy wealth,
That doth enrich these downs, is worth a thought
To this my errand, and the care it brought.
But, O my virgin Lady, where is she ?
How chance she is not in your company ?

First B. To tell thee sadly,¹ Shepherd, without blame,
Or our neglect, we lost her as we came. 519

Spi. Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true.

First B. What fears, good Thyrsis? Pr'ythee briefly shew.

Spi. I'll tell ye; 'tis not vain or fabulous
(Though so esteem'd by shallow ignorance),
What the sage poets, taught by the heavenly Muse,
Storied of old, in high immortal verse,
Of dire chimeras, and enchanted isles,
And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to Hell;
For such there be; but unbelief is blind.

Within the navel of this hideous wood,
Immur'd in cypress shades a sorcerer dwells, 530
Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,
Deep skill'd in all his mother's witcheries;
And here to every thirsty wanderer
By sly enticement gives his baneful cup,
With many murmurs² mix'd, whose pleasing poison
The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious likeness of a beast
Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage
Character'd in the face: This have I learnt
Tending my flocks hard by i' the hilly crofts, 540
That brow this bottom-glade; whence night by night
He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl,
Like stabled wolves, or tigers at their prey,
Doing abhorred rites to Hecate
In their obscured haunts of inmost bowers.
Yet have they many baits, and guileful spells,
To inveigle and invite the unwary sense
Of them that pass unweeting by the way.
This evening late, by then the chewing flocks
Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb

¹ 'Sadly:' seriously.—² 'Murmurs:' referring to incantations sung over it.

Of knot-grass dew-besprent,¹ and were in fold, 551
I sat me down to watch upon a bank
With ivy canopied, and interwove
With flaunting honey-suckle, and began,
Wrapt in a pleasing fit of melancholy,
To meditate my rural minstrelsy,
Till fancy had her fill ; but, ere a close,
The wonted roar was up amidst the woods,
And fill'd the air with barbarous dissonance ;
At which I ceas'd, and listen'd them awhile, 560
Till an unusual stop of sudden silence
Gave respite to the drowsy frightened steeds,
That draw the litter of close-curtain'd Sleep ;
At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound
Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,
And stole upon the air, that even Silence
Was took ere she was ware, and wish'd she might
Deny her nature, and be never more,
Still to be so displac'd. I was all ear,
And took in strains that might create a soul 570
Under the ribs of Death : but O ! ere long,
Too well I did perceive it was the voice
Of my most honour'd Lady, your dear Sister.
Amaz'd I stood, harrow'd with grief and fear,
And, O poor hapless nightingale, thought I,
How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare !
Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,
Through paths and turnings often trod by day ;
Till, guided by mine ear I found the place
Where that damn'd wisard, hid in sly disguise 580
(For so by certain signs I knew), had met,
Already, ere my best speed could prevent,
The aidless innocent Lady, his wish'd prey ;

¹ 'Besprent : ' besprinkled.

Who gently ask'd if he had seen such two, 584
 Supposing him some neighbour villager.
 Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guess'd
 Ye were the two she meant ; with that I sprung
 Into swift flight, till I had found you here ;
 But farther know I not.

Sec. B. O night, and shades ! 590

How are ye join'd with Hell in triple knot
 Against the unarm'd weakness of one virgin,
 Alone, and helpless ! Is this the confidence
 You gave me, Brother ?

First B. Yes, and keep it still ;
 Lean on it safely ; not a period
 Shall be unsaid for me : Against the threats
 Of malice, or of sorcery, or that power
 Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm ;—
 Virtue may be assail'd, but never hurt, 600
 Surpriz'd by unjust force, but not enthrall'd ;
 Yea, even that, which mischief meant most harm,
 Shall in the happy trial prove most glory :
 But evil on itself shall back recoil,
 And mix no more with goodness ; when at last
 Gather'd like scum,¹ and settled to itself,
 It shall be in eternal restless change
 Self-fed and self-consumed : If this fail,
 The pillar'd firmament is rottenness,
 And earth's base built on stubble.—But come, let's on.
 Against the opposing will and arm of Heaven 611
 May never this just sword be lifted up !
 But for that damn'd magician, let him be girt
 With all the grisly legions that troop
 Under the sooty flag of Acheron,

¹ ' Scum : ' like the spots on the sun, at once born and burned by the fire of the luminary.

Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms 616
 'Twixt Africa and Ind, I'll find him out,
 And force him to return his purchase back,
 Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,
 Curs'd as his life.

Spi. Alas! good venturous Youth,
 I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise;
 But here thy sword can do thee little stead;
 Far other arms and other weapons must
 Be those, that quell the might of hellish charms:
 He with his bare wand can unthread thy joints,
 And crumble all thy sinews.

First B. Why pr'ythee, Shepherd,
 How durst thou then thyself approach so near,
 As to make this relation? 630

Spi. Care, and utmost shifts,
 How to secure the lady from surprisal,
 Brought to my mind a certain shepherd lad,
 Of small regard to see to, yet well skill'd
 In every virtuous plant, and healing herb,
 That spreads her verdant leaf to the morning ray:
 He lov'd me well, and oft would beg me sing;
 Which when I did, he on the tender grass
 Would sit and hearken even to ecstasy,
 And in requital ope his leathern scrip, 640
 And show me simples of a thousand names,
 Telling their strange and vigorous faculties:
 Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,
 But of divine effect, he cull'd me out;
 The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
 But in another country, as he said,
 Bore a bright golden flower, but not in this soil:
 Unknown, and like¹ esteem'd, and the dull swain

¹ 'Like:' little.

Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon : 649
 And yet more med'cinal is it than that Moly,
 That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave ;
 He call'd it Hæmony, and gave it me,
 And bade me keep it as of sovran use
 'Gainst all enchantments, mildew, blast, or damp,
 Or ghastly furies' apparition.
 I purs'd it up, but little reckoning made,
 Till now that this extremity compell'd :
 But now I find it true ; for by this means
 I knew the foul enchanter though disguis'd,
 Enter'd the very lime-twigs of his spells, 660
 And yet came off : If you have this about you
 (As I will give you when we go), you may
 Boldly assault the necromancer's hall ;
 Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood,
 And brandish'd blade, rush on him ; break his glass,
 And shed the luscious liquour on the ground,
 But seize his wand ; though he and his curs'd crew
 Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,
 Or like the sons of Vulcan vomit smoke,
 Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink. 670

First B. Thyrsis, lead on apace, I'll follow thee ;
 And some good Angel bear a shield before us !

The Scene changes to a stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness : soft music, tables spread with all dainties. COMUS appears with his rabble, and the LADY set in an enchanted chair, to whom he offers his glass, which she puts by, and goes about to rise.

Comus. Nay, Lady, sit ; if I but wave this wand,
 Your nerves are all chain'd up in alabaster,

And you a statue, or, as Daphne was, 675
Root-bound, that fled Apollo.

Lady. Fool, do not boast ;
Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind
With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
Thou hast immanacled, while Heaven sees good. 680

Comus. Why are you vex'd, Lady? Why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns, nor anger ; from these gates
Sorrow flies far : See, here be all the pleasures,
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the April buds in primrose-season.
And first, behold this cordial julep here,
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,
With spirits of balm and fragrant syrops mix'd :
Not that Nepenthes, which the wife of Thone 690
In Egypt¹ gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.
Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
And to those dainty limbs, which Nature lent
For gentle usage and soft delicacy ?
But you invert the covenants of her trust,
And harshly deal, like an ill borrower,
With that which you receiv'd on other terms ;
Scorning the unexempt condition, 700
By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
That have been tir'd all day without repast,
And timely rest have wanted ; but, fair Virgin,
This will restore all soon.

Lady. 'Twill not, false traitor!
'Twill not restore the truth and honesty,

¹ 'Egypt : ' see Homer.

That thou hast banish'd from thy tongue with lies. 708
 Was this the cottage, and the safe abode,
 Thou toldst me of? What grim aspects are these,
 These ugly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me!
 Hence with thy brew'd enchantments, foul deceiver!
 Hast thou betray'd my credulous innocence
 With visor'd falsehood and base forgery?
 And wouldst thou seek again to trap me here
 With lickerish baits, fit to ensnare a brute?
 Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,
 I would not taste thy treasonous offer; none,
 But such as are good men, can give good things;
 And that, which is not good, is not delicious 720
 To a well-govern'd and wise appetite.

Comus. O foolishness of men! that lend their ears
 To those budge doctors of the Stoick fur,¹
 And fetch their precepts from the Cynick tub,
 Praising the lean and sallow Abstinence.
 Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth
 With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
 Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,
 Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,
 But all to please and sate the curious taste? 730
 And set to work millions of spinning worms,
 That in their green shops weave the smooth-hair'd silk,
 To deck their sons; and, that no corner might
 Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
 She hutch'd² the all-worshipt ore, and precious gems,
 To store her children with: If all the world
 Should in a pet of temperance feed on pulse,
 Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
 The All-giver would be unthank'd, would be unprais'd.

¹ 'Budge,' 'fur:' an ancient ornament of the scholastic habit.—² 'Hutch'd:' hoarded.

Not half his riches known, and yet despis'd ; 740
And we should serve him as a grudging master,
As a penurious niggard of his wealth ;
And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
Who would be quite surcharg'd with her own weight,
And strangled with her waste fertility ;
The earth cumber'd, and the wing'd air dark'd with plumes,
The herds would over-multitude their lords,
The sea o'erfraught would swell, and the unsought diamonds
Would so imblaze the forehead of the deep,
And so bestud with stars, that they below 750
Would grow inur'd to light, and come at last
To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.
List, Lady ; be not coy, and be not cozen'd
With that same vaunted name, Virginity.
Beauty is Nature's coin, must not be hoarded,
But must be current ; and the good thereof
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
Unsavoury in the enjoyment of itself ;
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
It withers on the stalk with languish'd head. 760
Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown
In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,
Where most may wonder at the workmanship ;
It is for homely features to keep home,
They had their name thence ; coarse complexions,
And cheeks of sorry grain, will serve to ply
The sampler, and to tease the huswife's wool.
What need a vermeil-tinctur'd lip for that,
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the Morn ?
There was another meaning in these gifts ; 770
Think what, and be advis'd ; you are but young yet.

Lady. I had not thought to have unlock'd my lips
In this unhallow'd air, but that this juggler

Would think to charm my judgement, as mine eyes, 774
 Obtruding false rules prank'd in reason's garb.
 I hate when Vice can bolt¹ her arguments,
 And Virtue has no tongue to check her pride.—
 Impostor! do not charge most innocent Nature,
 As if she would her children should be riotous
 With her abundance; she, good cateress, 780
 Means her provision only to the good,
 That live according to her sober laws,
 And holy dictate of spare Temperance:
 If every just man, that now pines with want,
 Had but a moderate and beseeming share
 Of that which lewdly-pamper'd Luxury
 Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
 Nature's full blessings would be well dispens'd
 In unsuperfluous even proportion,
 And she no whit incumber'd with her store; 790
 And then the Giver would be better thank'd,
 His praise due paid: For swinish Gluttony
 Ne'er looks to Heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,
 But with besotted base ingratitude
 Crams, and blasphemes his Feeder. Shall I go on?
 Or have I said enough? To him that dares
 Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
 Against the sun-clad Power of Chastity,
 Fain would I something say, yet to what end?
 Thou hast nor ear, nor soul, to apprehend 800
 The sublime notion, and high mystery,
 That must be utter'd to unfold the sage
 And serious doctrine of Virginity;
 And thou art worthy that thou shouldst not know
 More happiness than this thy present lot.
 Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetorick,

¹ 'Bolt:' to sift and separate.

That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence ; 807
 Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinc'd :
 Yet, should I try, the uncontrouled worth
 Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits
 To such a flame of sacred vehemence,
 That dumb things would be mov'd to sympathize,
 And the brute Earth would lend her nerves, and shake,
 Till all thy magick structures, rear'd so high,
 Were shatter'd into heaps o'er thy false head.

Comus. She fables not ; I feel that I do fear
 Her words set off by some superiour power ;
 And though not mortal, yet a cold shuddering dew
 Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
 Speaks thunder, and the chains of Erebus, 820
 To some of Saturn's crew. I must dissemble,
 And try her yet more strongly.—Come, no more ;
 This is mere moral babble, and direct
 Against the canon-laws of our foundation :
 I must not suffer this ; yet 'tis but the lees
 And settlings of a melancholy blood :
 But this will cure all straight ; one sip of this
 Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight,
 Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.—

*The BROTHERS rush in with swords drawn, wrest his
 glass out of his hand, and break it against the
 ground ; his rout make sign of resistance, but are
 all driven in. The ATTENDANT SPIRIT comes in.*

Spi. What, have you let the false enchanter 'scape ?
 O ye mistook, ye should have snatch'd his wand, 831
 And bound him fast ; without his rod revers'd,
 And backward mutters of dissevering power,
 We cannot free the Lady that sits here
 In stony fetters fix'd, and motionless :

Yet stay, be not disturb'd ; now I bethink me, 836
 Some other means I have which may be us'd,
 Which once of Melibœus old I learnt,
 The soothest¹ shepherd that e'er pip'd on plains.

There is a gentle Nymph not far from hence,
 That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream,
 Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure ;
 Whilom she was the daughter of Locrine,
 That had the scepter from his father Brute.²
 She, guiltless damsel, flying the mad pursuit
 Of her enraged stepdame Guendolen,
 Commended her fair innocence to the flood,
 That staid her flight with his cross-flowing course.
 The Water-Nymphs, that in the bottom play'd,
 Held up their pearled wrists, and took her in, 850
 Bearing her straight to aged Nereus' hall ;
 Who, piteous of her woes, rear'd her lank head,
 And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
 In nectar'd lavers, strew'd with asphodel ;
 And through the porch and inlet of each sense
 Dropp'd in ambrosial oils, till she reviv'd,
 And underwent a quick immortal change,
 Made goddess of the river : still she retains
 Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
 Visits the herds along the twilight meadows, 860
 Helping all urchin³ blasts, and ill-luck signs
 That the shrewd meddling elfe delights to make,
 Which she with precious vial'd liquours heals ;
 For which the shepherds at their festivals
 Carol her goodness loud in rustick lays,
 And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream
 Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffadils.

¹ 'Soothest : ' truest.—² 'Brute : ' Brutus.—³ 'Urchin : ' hedgehog, thought a beast of evil omen.

And, as the old swain said, she can unlock 868
 The clasping charm, and thaw the numming spell,
 If she be right invok'd in warbled song ;
 For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift
 To aid a virgin, such as was herself,
 In hard-besetting need ; this will I try,
 And add the power of some adjuring verse.

SONG.

Sabrina fair,
 Listen where thou art sitting
 Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
 In twisted braids of lillies knitting
 The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair ;
 Listen for dear honour's sake, 880
 Goddess of the silver lake,
 Listen, and save.

Listen, and appear to us,
 In name of great Oceanus ;
 By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
 And Tethys'¹ grave majestic pace,
 By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,
 And the Carpathian wizard's² hook,
 By scaly Triton's winding shell,
 And old sooth-saying Glaucus' spell, 890
 By Leucothea's lovely hands,
 And her Son that rules the strands,
 By Thetis'³ tinsel-slipper'd feet,
 And the songs of Syrens sweet,
 By dead Parthenope's⁴ dear tomb,
 And fair Ligea's⁵ golden comb,

¹ 'Tethys:' wife of Oceanus. — ² 'Carpathian wizard:' Proteus. —
³ 'Glaucus,' 'Leucothea,' 'her Son' Palaemon, 'Thetis:' all sea-deities. —
⁴ 'Parthenope:' a Syren buried in Naples; see Wordsworth's sonnet on the
 Departure of Scott for Italy. — ⁵ 'Ligea:' another of the Syrens.

Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks, 897
 Sleeking her soft alluring locks ;
 By all the Nymphs that nightly dance
 Upon thy streams with wily glance,
 Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head,
 From thy coral-paven bed,
 And bridle in thy headlong wave,
 Till thou our summons answer'd have.

Listen, and save !

SABRINA rises, attended by Water-Nymphs, and sings.

By the rushy-fringed bank,
 Where grows the willow, and the osier dank,
 My sliding chariot stays,
 Thick set with agate, and the azure sheen
 Of turkis blue, and emerald green, 910
 That in the channel strays ;
 Whilst from off the waters fleet
 Thus I set my printless feet
 O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
 That bends not as I tread ;
 Gentle Swain, at thy request,
 I am here.

Spi. Goddess dear,
 We implore thy powerful hand
 To undo the charmed band 920
 Of true virgin here distress'd,
 Through the force, and through the wile,
 Of unblest enchanter vile.

Sab. Shepherd, 'tis my office best
 To help ensnared chastity :
 Brightest Lady, look on me ;
 Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
 Drops, that from my fountain pure

I have kept, of precious cure ; 929
 Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
 Thrice upon thy rubied lip :
 Next this marble venom'd seat,
 Smear'd with gums of glutinous heat,
 I touch with chaste palms moist and cold :—
 Now the spell hath lost his hold ;
 And I must haste, ere morning hour,
 To wait in Amphitrite's bower.

SABRINA descends, and the LADY rises out of her Seat.

Spi. Virgin, daughter of Locrine,¹
 Sprung of old Anchises' line,
 May thy brimmed waves for this 940
 Their full tribute never miss
 From a thousand petty rills,
 That tumble down the snowy hills :
 Summer drouth, or singed air,
 Never scorch thy tresses fair,
 Nor wet October's torrent flood
 Thy molten crystal fill with mud ;
 May thy billows roll ashore
 The beryl and the golden ore ;
 May thy lofty head be crown'd 950
 With many a tower and terrace round,
 And here and there thy banks upon
 With groves of myrrh and cinnamon !

Come, Lady, while Heaven lends us grace,
 Let us fly this cursed place,
 Lest the sorcerer us entice
 With some other new device.
 Not a waste or needless sound
 Till we come to holier ground ;

¹ ' Locrine : ' descended from Eneas, the son of Anchises.

I shall be your faithful guide 960
 Through this gloomy covert wide,
 And not many furlongs thence
 Is your Father's residence,
 Where this night are met in state
 Many a friend to gratulate
 His wish'd presence ; and beside
 All the swains, that there abide,
 With jigs and rural dance resort ;
 We shall catch them at their sport,
 And our sudden coming there 970
 Will double all their mirth and chere :
 Come, let us haste, the stars grow high,
 But night sits monarch yet in the mid sky.

*The Scene changes, presenting Ludlow Town and the
 President's Castle ; then come in Country Dancers ;
 after them the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, with the TWO
 BROTHERS and the LADY.*

SONG.

Spi. Back, Shepherds, back ; enough your play,
 Till next sun-shine holiday :
 Here be, without duck¹ or nod,
 Other trippings to be trod
 Of lighter toes, and such court guise
 As Mercury did first devise,
 With the mincing Dryades, 980
 On the lawns, and on the leas.

*This second Song presents them to their Father and
 Mother.*

Noble Lord, and Lady bright,
 I have brought ye new delight ;

¹ 'Duck : ' bow.

Here behold so goodly grown 984
 Three fair branches of your own ;
 Heaven hath timely tried their youth,
 Their faith, their patience, and their truth
 And sent them here through hard assays
 With a crown of deathless praise,
 To triumph in victorious dance 990
 O'er sensual Folly and Intemperance.

The Dances being ended, the SPIRIT epiloguizes.

Spi. To the ocean now I fly,
 And those happy climes that lie
 Where day never shuts his eye,
 Up in the broad fields of the sky ;
 There I suck the liquid air
 All amidst the gardens fair
 Of Hesperus,¹ and his daughters three
 That sing about the golden tree :
 Along the crisped shades and bowers 1000
 Revels the spruce and jocund Spring ;
 The Graces, and the rosy-bosom'd Hours,
 Thither all their bounties bring ;
 There eternal Summer dwells,
 And West-winds, with musky wing,
 About the cedar'n alleys fling
 Nard and Cassia's balmy smells.
 Iris there with humid bow
 Waters the odorous banks, that blow
 Flowers of more mingled hue 1010
 Than her purpled² scarf can shew ;
 And drenches with Elysian dew
 (List, mortals, if your ears be true),
 Beds of hyacinth and roses,

¹ 'Hesperus : ' see Ovid, Met. ix.—² 'Purpled : ' fringed.

Where young Adonis oft reposes,
 Waxing well of his deep wound
 In slumber soft, and on the ground
 Sadly sits the Assyrian queen :¹
 But far above in spangled sheen
 Celestial Cupid, her fam'd son, advanc'd,
 Holds his dear Psyche² sweet entranc'd,
 After her wandering labours long,
 Till free consent the Gods among
 Make her his eternal bride,
 And from her fair unspotted side
 Two blissful twins are to be born,
 Youth and Joy: so Jove hath sworn.

But now my task is smoothly done,
 I can fly, or I can run,
 Quickly to the green earth's end,
 Where the bow'd welkin slow doth bend ;
 And from thence can soar as soon
 To the corners of the moon.

Mortals, that would follow me,
 Love Virtue ; she alone is free :
 She can teach ye how to climb
 Higher than the sphery chime ;³
 Or if Virtue feeble were,
 Heaven itself would stoop to her.

¹ 'Assyrian queen:' Venus.—² 'Cupid' and 'Psyche:' see Emerson's 'Essay on Love.'—³ 'Sphery chime:' music of spheres.

ARCADES.¹

*Part of an Entertainment presented to the COUNTESS OF
DERBY at Harefield by some noble persons of her
family, who appear on the scene in pastoral habit,
moving toward the seat of state with this Song:—*

I. SONG.

Look, Nymphs and Shepherds, look,
What sudden blaze of majesty
Is that which we from hence descry,
Too divine to be mistook:

 This, this is she²
To whom our vows and wishes bend;
Here our solemn search hath end.

Fame, that, her high worth to raise,
Seem'd erst so lavish and profuse,
We may justly now accuse
Of detraction from her praise:

 Less than half we find exprest,
 Envy bid conceal the rest.

10

¹ 'Arcades:' the fragment of a larger performance, the rest of which was probably in prose. It was performed at Harefield before the Countess of Derby, its heroine, not later than 1636. She was married at the time to Lord Chancellor Egerton, and died in 1635-6. She was related to Edmund Spenser, who celebrated her, when a widow, in his 'Colin Clout's come home again,' as Amaryllis.—² 'This is she:' namely, the Countess of Derby.

Mark, what radiant state she spreads, 14
 In circle round her shining throne,
 Shooting her beams like silver threads ;
 This, this is she alone,
 Sitting, like a goddess bright,
 In the center of her light.

Might she the wise Latona¹ be, 20
 Or the tower'd Cybele,²
 Mother of a hundred gods ?
 Juno dares not give her odds :
 Who had thought this clime had held
 A deity so unparallel'd ?

*As they come forward, the GENIUS of the Wood appears,
 and turning towards them, speaks.*

Gen. Stay, gentle Swains ; for, though in this disguise,
 I see bright honour sparkle through your eyes ;
 Of famous Arcady ye are, and sprung
 Of that renowned flood, so often sung,
 Divine Alphéus, who by secret sluice 30
 Stole under seas, to meet his Arethuse ;
 And ye, the breathing roses of the wood,
 Fair silver-buskin'd Nymphs, as great and good ;
 I know, this quest of yours, and free intent,
 Was all in honour and devotion meant
 To the great mistress of yon princely shrine,
 Whom with low reverence I adore as mine ;
 And, with all helpful service, will comply
 To farther this night's glad solemnity ;

¹ ' Latona : ' Diana. — ² Cybele : ' mother of the gods.

And lead ye, where ye may more near behold 40
 What shallow-searching Fame hath left untold ;
 Which I full oft, amidst these shades alone,
 Have sat to wonder at, and gaze upon :
 For know, by lot from Jove I am the Power
 Of this fair wood, and live in oaken bower,
 To nurse the saplings tall, and curl the grove
 With ringlets quaint, and wanton windings wove.
 And all my plants I save from nightly ill
 Of noisome winds, and blasting vapours chill :
 And from the boughs brush off the evil dew, 50
 And heal the harms of thwarting thunder blue,
 Or what the cross dire-looking planet smites,
 Or hurtful worm with canker'd venom bites.
 When evening gray doth rise, I fetch my round
 Over the mount, and all this hallow'd ground ;
 And early, ere the odorous breath of morn
 Awakes the slumbering leaves, or tassel'd horn
 Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about,
 Number my ranks, and visit every sprout
 With puissant words, and murmurs made to bless. 60
 But else in deep of night, when drowsiness
 Hath lock'd up mortal sense, then listen I
 To the celestial Syrens'¹ harmony,
 That sit upon the nine infolded spheres,
 And sing to those that hold the vital shears,
 And turn the adamantine spindle round,
 On which the fate of gods and men is wound.

¹ 'Syrens:' this is an apt allusion to Plato's notion of Fate or Necessity holding a spindle of adamant, while, with her three daughters, Lachesis, Clotho, and Atropos, she conducts a ravishing musical harmony. Nine Syrens or Muses sit on the summit of the spheres, and produce a music, in harmony with which the spindle revolves, and the three daughters of Fate for ever sing—a notion involving many and mysterious lessons.

Such sweet compulsion doth in musick lie, 68
 To lull the daughters of Necessity,
 And keep unsteady Nature to her law,
 And the low world in measur'd motion draw
 After the heavenly tune, which none can hear
 Of human mould, with gross unpurged ear;
 And yet such musick worthiest were to blaze
 The peerless highth of her immortal praise,
 Whose lustre leads us, and for her most fit,
 If my inferiour hand or voice could hit
 Inimitable sounds : yet, as we go,
 Whate'er the skill of lesser gods can show,
 I will assay, her worth to celebrate, 80
 And so attend ye toward her glittering state ;
 Where ye may all, that are of noble stem,
 Approach, and kiss her sacred vesture's hem.

II. SONG.

O'er the smooth enamell'd green
 Where no print of step hath been,
 Follow me, as I sing
 And touch the warbled string,
 Under the shady roof
 Of branching elm star-proof.
 Follow me ; 90
 I will bring you where she sits,
 Clad in splendour as befits
 Her deity.
 Such a rural Queen
 All Arcadia hath not seen.

III. SONG.

Nymphs and Shepherds, dance no more
By sandy Ladon's¹ lillied banks ;
On old Lycæus, or Cyllene hoar,
Trip no more in twilight ranks ;
Through Erymanth your loss deplore,
A better soil shall give ye thanks.
From the stony Mænalus
Bring your flocks, and live with us ;
Here ye shall have greater grace,
To serve the Lady of this place.
Though Syrinx² your Pan's mistress were,
Yet Syrinx well might wait on her,
Such a rural Queen
All Arcadia hath not seen.

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¹ 'Ladon,' &c. : ancient rivers.—² 'Syrinx : ' see Ben Jonson's Syrinx.

MINOR POEMS.

LYCIDAS.

A MONODY.

In this MONODY, the Author bewails a learned Friend,¹ unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish Seas, 1637. And by occasion foretells the ruin of our corrupted clergy, then in their highth.

YET once more,² O ye laurels, and once more
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never-sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude ;
And, with forc'd fingers rude,
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year :
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due :
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer :
Who would not sing for Lycidas ? He knew 10
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.

¹ Edward King, Esq., the son of Sir John King, knight, secretary for Ireland. He was sailing from Chester to Ireland, on a visit to his friends in that country, when in calm weather, not far from the English coast, the ship struck upon a rock, and suddenly sunk to the bottom with all that were on board, August 10, 1637. Mr King was a fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, and was only twenty-five years of age at his death. He had been distinguished at college by his piety and learning ; and the year after his death there appeared a collection of elegiac verses on his loss—three in Greek, nineteen in Latin, and thirteen in English—Milton's being the last in the collection. King had been intended for the Church.—² 'Once more : ' meaning, I am again called back to poetry, by a distressing necessity, from other studies.

He must not float upon his watery bier 12
 Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
 Without the meed of some melodious tear.

Begin then, Sisters¹ of the sacred well,²
 That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring ;
 Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
 Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse :
 So may some gentle Muse
 With lucky words favour my destin'd urn ; 20
 And, as he passes, turn,
 And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.

For we were nurs'd upon the self-same hill,
 Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill.
 Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd
 Under the opening eye-lids of the morn,
 We drove afield, and both together heard
 What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
 Battening our flocks with the fresh dew of night,
 Oft, till the star, that rose, at evening, bright, 30
 Toward heaven's descent had slop'd his westering wheel.
 Mean while the rural ditties were not mute,
 Temper'd to the oaten flute ;
 Rough Satyrs danc'd, and Fauns with cloven heel
 From the glad sound would not be absent long ;
 And old Damœtas lov'd to hear our song.

But, O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
 Now thou art gone, and never must return !
 Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves
 With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown, 40
 And all their echoes mourn :
 The willows, and the hazel copses green,
 Shall now no more be seen
 Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.

¹ 'Sisters:' Muses. — ² 'Sacred well:' Helicon.

As killing as the canker to the rose, 45
 Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
 Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
 When first the white-thorn blows ;
 Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
 Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas ? 51
 For neither were ye playing on the steep,¹
 Where your old Bards, the famous Druids, lie,
 Nor on the shaggy top of Mona² high,
 Nor yet where Deva³ spreads her wisard stream :
 Ay me ! I fondly dream !

Had ye been there—for what could that have done ?
 What could the Muse⁴ herself that Orpheus⁵ bore,
 The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
 Whom universal Nature did lament, 60
 When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,
 His gory visage down the stream was sent,
 Down the swift Hebrus⁶ to the Lesbian shore ?

Alas ! what boots it with incessant care
 To tend the homely, slighted shepherd's trade,
 And strictly meditate the thankless Muse ?
 Were it not better done, as others use,
 To sport with Amaryllis⁷ in the shade,
 Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair ?
 Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise 70
 (That last infirmity of noble mind)
 To scorn delights, and live laborious days ;
 But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
 And think to burst out into sudden blaze,

¹ 'Steep : ' the mountains of Denbighshire.—² 'Mona : ' the Isle of Man.—
³ 'Deva : ' the English Dee beside Chester, called 'wisard,' as the sacred
 boundary between Wales and England.—⁴ 'The Muse : ' Calliope.—⁵ 'Or-
 pheus : ' torn in pieces by the Bacchanalians.—⁶ 'Hebrus : ' a river in Thrace.
⁷ 'Amaryllis,' &c. : see Horace.

Comes the blind Fury¹ with the abhorred shears, 75
 And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
 Phœbus replied, and touch'd my trembling ears ;
 "Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
 Nor in the glistening foil
 Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies ; 80
 But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
 And perfect witness of all-judging Jove ;
 As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
 Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed."

O fountain Arethuse, and thou honour'd flood,
 Smooth-sliding Mincius,² crown'd with vocal reeds.
 That strain I heard was of a higher mood :
 But now my oat proceeds,
 And listens to the herald of the sea
 That came in Neptune's plea ; 90
 He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the felon winds,
 What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain ?
 And question'd every gust of rugged wings
 That blows from off each beaked promontory :
 They knew not of his story ;
 And sage Hippotades³ their answer brings,
 That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd ;
 The air was calm, and on the level brine
 Sleek Panope with all her sisters play'd.
 It was that fatal and perfidious bark, 100
 Built in the eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,
 That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next Camus,⁴ reverend sire, went footing slow,
 His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
 Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge

¹ 'Fury:' Destiny. — ² 'Arethuse' and 'Mincius:' celebrated ancient streams of pastoral song. — ³ 'Hippotades:' Eolus, the son of Hippotas, ruler of the winds. — ⁴ 'Camus:' genius of the river Cam.

Like to that sanguine flower inscrib'd with woe. 106
 "Ah! Who hath reft (quoth he) my dearest pledge?"
 Last came, and last did go,
 The pilot¹ of the Galilean lake;
 Two massy keys he bore of metals twain,
 (The golden opes, the iron shuts amain),
 He shook his miter'd locks, and stern bespake:
 "How well could I have spar'd for thee, young swain,
 Enow of such, as for their bellies' sake
 Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold!
 Of other care they little reckoning make,
 Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
 And shove away the worthy bidden guest;
 Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
 A sheep-hook, or have learn'd aught else the least 120
 That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!
 What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
 And when they list, their lean and flashy songs
 Grate on their scrannel² pipes of wretched straw;
 The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
 But, swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw,
 Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
 Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
 Daily devours apace, and nothing sed:³
 But that two-handed engine⁴ at the door 130
 Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."

Return, Alpheus,⁵ the dread voice is past,
 That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
 And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
 Their bells, and flowerets of a thousand hues.
 Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use

¹ 'The pilot:' Peter.—² 'Scrannel:' screeching.—³ 'Sed:' old spelling for said.—⁴ 'Two-handed engine:' the sword with the two edges issuing out of Christ's mouth.—⁵ 'Alpheus:' the Sicilian Muse of Theocritus and others.

Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks, 137
 On whose fresh lap the swart-star¹ sparely looks ;
 Throw hither all your quaint enamell'd eyes,
 That on the green turf suck the honied showers,
 And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
 Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
 The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
 The white pink, and the pansy freak'd with jet,
 The glowing violet,
 The musk-rose, and the well-attir'd woodbine,
 With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
 And every flower that sad embroidery wears :
 Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
 And daffodillies fill their cups with tears, 150
 To strew the laureat herse where Lycid lies.
 For, so to interpose a little ease,
 Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise ;
 Ay me! Whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
 Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurl'd,
 Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
 Where thou perhaps, under the whelming tide,
 Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world ;
 Or whether thou, to our moist² vows denied,
 Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus³ old, 160
 Where the great Vision of the guarded Mount⁴
 Looks towards Namancos⁵ and Bayona's hold ;

¹ 'Swart-star:' dog-star. — ² 'Moist:' wet with tears. — ³ 'Bellerus:' a Cornish giant. — ⁴ 'The guarded Mount:' Mount St Michael; not far from the Land's end in Cornwall, whence at low water it is accessible. The *guarded* mount, says Mr Warton, is simply the *fortified* mount; * and the *great vision* is the famous apparition of the Archangel Michael, who is said to have appeared on the top of the mount, and to have directed a church to be built there. — ⁵ 'Namancos,' or Numantia: a town of Old Castile, once highly celebrated in the Spanish history.

* Is it not the Archangel rather than the fortress, who *guards* the mount?

Look homeward, Angel,¹ now, and melt with ruth : 163
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woful Shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor ;
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore 170
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky :
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walk'd the waves ;
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and, singing, in their glory move, 180
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more ;
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray ;
He touch'd the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Dorick lay :
And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills, 190
And now was dropt into the western bay :
At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blue :
To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

¹ ' Angel : ' Michael, namely.

L'ALLEGRO.¹

HENCE, loathed Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-raven sings ;
There under ebon shades and low-brow'd rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell. 10
But come, thou goddess fair and free,
In Heaven yclep'd Euphrosyne,
And by Men, heart-easing Mirth ;
Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
With two sister Graces² more,
To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore :
Or whether (as some sager sing)
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying ; 20
There on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses wash'd in dew,
Fill'd her with thee a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest, and youthful Jollity,

¹ 'L'Allegro:' i. e., The Cheerful Man.—² 'Two sister Graces:' meat and drink.

Quips,¹ and Cranks,² and wanton Wiles, 27
 Nods, and Becks, and wreathed Smiles,
 Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
 And love to live in dimples sleek ;
 Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
 And Laughter holding both his sides.
 Come, and trip it, as you go,
 On the light fantastick toe ;
 And in thy right hand lead with thee
 The mountain-nymph sweet Liberty ;
 And, if I give thee honour due,
 Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
 To live with her, and live with thee,
 In unreprieved³ pleasures free ; 40
 To hear the lark begin his flight,
 And singing startle the dull night,
 From his watch-tower in the skies,
 Till the dappled dawn doth rise ;
 Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
 And at my window bid good morrow,
 Through the sweet-briar, or the vine,
 Or the twisted eglantine :⁴
 While the cock, with lively din,
 Scatters the rear of Darkness thin ; 50
 And to the stack, or the barn-door,
 Stoutly struts his dames before :
 Oft listening how the hounds and horn
 Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
 From the side of some hoar hill,
 Through the high wood echoing shrill :
 Some time walking, not unseen,
 By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,

¹ ' Quips : ' repartees.—² ' Cranks : ' cross-purposes.—³ ' Unreprieved : ' i. e., innocent.—⁴ ' Twisted eglantine : ' the honeysuckle.

Right against the eastern gate 59
 Where the great sun begins his state,
 Rob'd in flames, and amber light
 The clouds in thousand liveries dight ;
 While the ploughman, near at hand,
 Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
 And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
 And the mower whets his sithe,
 And every shepherd tells his tale
 Under the hawthorn in the dale.
 Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
 Whilst the landskip round it measures ; 70
 Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
 Where the nibbling flocks do stray ;
 Mountains, on whose barren breast
 The labouring clouds do often rest ;
 Meadows trim with daisies pied,¹
 Shallow brooks, and rivers wide :
 Towers and battlements it sees
 Bosom'd high in tufted trees,
 Where perhaps some Beauty lies,
 The Cynosure² of neighbouring eyes. 80
 Hard by, a cottage chimney smoaks,
 From betwixt two aged oaks,
 Where Corydon³ and Thyrsis, met,
 Are at their savoury dinner set
 Of herbs, and other country messes,
 Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses ;
 And then in haste her bower she leaves,
 With Thestylis to bind the sheaves ;
 Or, if the earlier season lead,
 To the tann'd haycock in the mead.

¹ 'Pied : ' of various colours.—² 'Cynosure : ' loadstar.—³ 'Corydon,' &c. :
 classical names adapted to modern manners and labours.

Sometimes with secure delight 91
 The upland hamlets will invite,
 When the merry bells ring round,
 And the jocund rebecks¹ sound
 To many a youth, and many a maid,
 Dancing in the chequer'd shade ;
 And young and old come forth to play
 On a sun-shine holy-day,
 Till the live-long day-light fail :
 Then to the spicy nut-brown ale, 100
 With stories told of many a feat,
 How faery Mab the junkets² eat ;
 She was pinch'd, and pull'd, she sed ;
 And he, by friar's lantern³ led,
 Tells how the drudging Goblin⁴ swet.
 To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
 When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
 His shadowy flail hath thresh'd the corn,
 That ten day-labourers could not end ;
 Then lies him down the lubbar⁵ fiend, 110
 And, stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
 Basks at the fire his hairy strength ;
 And crop-full out of doors he flings,
 Ere the first cock his matin rings.
 Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
 By whispering winds soon lull'd asleep.
 Tower'd cities please us then,
 And the busy hum of men,
 Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
 In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold, 120
 With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
 Rain influence, and judge the prize

¹ 'Rebeck:' a kind of fiddle.—² 'Junket:' rural supper.—³ 'Friar's lantern:' Will o' Wisp.—⁴ 'Goblin:' Robin Goodfellow, the English Brownie.—
⁵ 'Lubbar:' clownish.

Of wit or arms, while both contend
 To win her grace, whom all commend.
 There let Hymen oft appear
 In saffron¹ robe, with taper clear,
 And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
 With mask, and antique pageantry ;
 Such sights as youthful poets dream
 On summer eves by haunted stream.
 Then to the well-trod stage anon,
 If Jonson's learned sock be on,
 Or sweetest Shakspeare, Fancy's child,
 Warble his native wood-notes wild.

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And ever, against eating cares,
 Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
 Married to immortal verse ;
 Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
 In notes, with many a winding bout²
 Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
 With wanton heed and giddy cunning ;
 The melting voice through mazes running,
 Untwisting all the chains that tie
 The hidden soul of harmony ;
 That Orpheus' self may heave his head
 From golden slumber on a bed
 Of heap'd Elysian flowers, and hear
 Such strains as would have won the ear
 Of Pluto, to have quite set free
 His half-regain'd Eurydice.

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These delights if thou canst give,
 Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

¹ 'Saffron:' the traditional colour of the robes of the god of marriage.—
² 'Bout:' fold or twist.

IL PENNEROSO.¹

HENCE, vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred!
How little you bested,
Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sun-beams;
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train. 10
But hail, thou Goddess, sage and holy,
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister² might beseem,
Or that starr'd Ethiop queen³ that strove
To set her beauty's praise above 20
The Sea-Nymphs, and their powers offended:
Yet thou art higher far descended:
Thee, bright-hair'd Vesta,⁴ long of yore,
To solitary Saturn⁵ bore;
His daughter she; in Saturn's reign,
Such mixture was not held a stain:

¹ 'Il Penseroso: ' The Thoughtful or Pensive Man. — ² 'Prince Memnon's sister: ' an imaginary character. — ³ 'Ethiop queen: ' Cassiope, Queen of Ethiopia, who was said to have been turned into a constellation. — ⁴ 'Vesta' means genius. — ⁵ 'Saturn' represents gloomy and deep-thoughted minds.

Oft in glimmering bowers and glades 27
 He met her, and in secret shades
 Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
 Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove.
 Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
 Sober, stedfast, and demure,
 All in a robe of darkest grain,
 Flowing with majestick train,
 And sable stole of cyprus¹ lawn,
 Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
 Come, but keep thy wonted state,
 With even step, and musing gait;
 And looks commérching with the skies,
 Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes : 40
 There, held in holy passion still,
 Forget thyself to marble, till
 With a sad leaden downward cast
 Thou fix them on the earth as fast:
 And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
 Spare Fast, that oft with Gods doth diet,
 And hears the Muses in a ring
 Aye round about Jove's altar sing :
 And add to these retired Leisure,
 That in trim gardens takes his pleasure : 50
 But first, and chiefest, with thee bring,
 Him that yon soars on golden wing,
 Guiding the fiery-wheeled² throne,
 The Cherub Contemplation ;
 And the mute Silence hist along,
 'Less Philomel³ will deign a song,
 In her sweetest saddest plight,
 Smoothing the rugged brow of night,

¹ 'Cyprus:' a thin transparent texture.—² 'Fiery-wheeled:' an allusion to Ezekiel's wheels.—³ 'Philomel:' the nightingale.

While Cynthia¹ checks her dragon yoke, 59
Gently o'er the accustom'd oak :
Sweet bird, that shun'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy !
Thee, chauntress, oft, the woods among,
I woo, to hear thy even-song ;
And, missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heaven's wide pathless way ; 70
And oft, as if her head she bow'd,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off Curfeu sound,
Over some wide-water'd shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar :
Or, if the air will not permit,
Some still removed place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom ; 80
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the belman's² drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm.
Or let my lamp, at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
With thrice great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold

¹ ' Cynthia : ' the moon.—² ' Belman : ' the watchman, who anciently muttered blessings as he passed.

The immortal mind that hath forsook 91
 Her mansion in this fleshly nook :
 And of those demons¹ that are found
 In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
 Whose power hath a true consent
 With planet, or with element.
 Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
 In scepter'd pall come sweeping by,
 Presenting Thebes,² or Pelops' line,³
 Or the tale of Troy divine ; 100
 Or what (though rare) of later age
 Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.

But, O sad Virgin, that thy power
 Might raise Musæus⁴ from his bower !
 Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
 Such notes, as, warbled to the string,
 Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
 And made Hell grant what love did seek !
 Or call up him⁵ that left half-told 110
 The story of Cambuscan bold,
 Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
 And who had Canace to wife,
 That own'd the virtuous ring and glass ;
 And of the wond'rous horse of brass
 On which the Tartar king did ride :
 And if aught else great bards beside
 In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
 Of turneys, and of trophies hung,
 Of forests, and enchantments drear,
 Where more is meant than meets the ear.

¹ 'Demons : ' fallen angels permitted to rule over the elements (according to the scholastic belief) till the day of judgment. — ² 'Thebes : ' Eschylus' 'Seven before Thebes.' — ³ 'Pelops' line : ' the Electra of Sophocles, &c. — ⁴ 'Musæus : ' an ancient Greek poet, of a grave and solemn cast of genius. — ⁵ 'Him : ' Chaucer in his 'Squire's Tale.'

Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career, 121
 Till civil-suited¹ Morn appear ;
 Not trick'd and frounc'd² as she was wont
 With the Attick boy to hunt,
 But kercheft in a comely cloud,
 While rocking winds are piping loud,
 Or usher'd with a shower still,
 When the gust hath blown his fill,
 Ending on the rustling leaves,
 With minute drops from off the eaves. 130
 And, when the sun begins to fling
 His flaring beams, me, goddess, bring
 To arched walks of twilight groves,
 And shadows brown, that Sylvan³ loves,
 Of pine, or monumental oak,
 Where the rude axe, with heaved stroke,
 Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt,
 Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.
 There in close covert by some brook,
 Where no profaner eye may look, 140
 Hide me from day's garish eye,
 While the bee with honied thigh,
 That at her flowery work doth sing,
 And the waters murmuring,
 With such consort as they keep,
 Entice the dewy-feather'd Sleep ;
 And let some strange mysterious Dream
 Wave at his wings in aery stream
 Of lively portraiture display'd,
 Softly on my eye-lids laid. 150
 And, as I wake, sweet musick breathe
 Above, about, or underneath,

* 'Civil:' grave, decent.—² 'Frounc'd:' curled.—³ 'Sylvan:' the god of the woods.

Sent by some Spirit to mortals good, 153
Or the unseen Genius of the wood.

But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloysters pale,
And love the high-embowed¹ roof,
With antick pillars massy proof,
And storied² windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light : 160

There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voic'd quire below,
In service high, and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all heaven before mine eyes.

And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell 170
Of every star that heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew ;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetick strain.

These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

¹ 'High-embowed : ' vaulted. — ² 'Storied : ' painted with stories.

SONNETS.

I. TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

O NIGHTINGALE, that on yon bloomy spray
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still ;
Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart dost fill,
While the jolly Hours lead on propitious May.
Thy liquid notes that close the eye of day,
First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,
Portend success in love ; O, if Jove's will
Have link'd that amorous power to thy soft lay,
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate
Fortell my hopeless doom in some grove nigh ;
As thou from year to year hast sung too late
For my relief, yet hadst no reason why :
Whether the Muse, or Love, call thee his mate,
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

II.

DONNA leggiadra, il cui bel nome honora
L' herbosa val di Rheno, e il nobil varco ;
Bene è colui d'ogni valore scarco,
Qual tuo spirto gentil non innamora ;
Che dolcemente mostra sì di fuora
De sui atti soavi giamai parco,
E i don', che son d'amor saette ed arco,
La onde l' alta tua virtù s'infiora.

Quando tu vaga parli, o lieta canti
Che mover possa duro alpestre legno,
Guardi ciascun a gli occhi, ed a gli orecchi
L'entrata, chi di te si trouva indegno ;
Gratia sola di su gli vaglia, inanti
Che'l disio amoroso al cuor s'invecchi.

III.

QUAL in colle aspro, al imbrunir di sera
L'avezza giovinetta pastorella
Va bagnando l'herbetta strana e bella
Che mal si spande a disusata spera
Fuor di sua natia alma primavera,
Così Amor meco insù la lingua snella
Desta il fior novo di strania favella,
Mentre io di te, vezzosamente altera,
Canto, dal mio buon popol non inteso
E'l bel Tamigi cangio col bel Arno.
Amor lo volse, ed io a l'altrui peso
Seppi ch' Amor cosa mai volse indarno.
Deh ! foss' il mio cuor lento e'l duro seno
A chi pianta dal ciel si buon terreno.

CANZONE.

RIDONSI donne e giovani amorosi
M' accostandosi attorno, e perche scrivi,
Perche tu scrivi in lingua ignota e strana
Verseggiando d' amor, e come t'osi ?
Dinne, se la tua speme sia mai vana,
E de pensieri lo miglior t'arrivi ;
Così mi van burlando, altri rivi,

Altri lidi t'aspettan, ed altre onde
Nelle cui verdi sponde
Spuntati ad hor, ad hor a la tua chioma
L'immortal guiderdon d'etern frondi
Perche alle spalle tue soverchia soma?

Canzon dirotti, e tu per me rispondi
Dice mia Donna, e'l suo dir, é il mio cuore
Questa e lingua di cui si vanta Amore.

IV.

DIODATI, e te'l dirò con maraviglia,
Quel ritroso io ch'amor spreggiar soléa
E de suoi lacci spesso mi ridéa
Gia caddi, ov'huom dabben talhor s'impiglia.
Ne treccie d'oro, ne guancia vermiglia
M'abbaglian sì, ma sotto nova idea
Pellegrina bellezza che'l cuor bea,
Portamenti alti honesti, e nelle ciglia
Quel sereno fulgor d'amabil nero,
Parole adorne di lingua piu d'una,
E'l cantar che di mezzo l'hemispero
Traviar ben puo la faticosa Luna,
E degli occhi suoi auventa sì gran fuoco
Che l'incerar gli orecchi mi fia poco.

V.

PER certo i bei vostr'occhi, Donna mia
Esser non puo che non sian lo mio sole
Si mi percuoton forte, come ei suole
Per l'arene di Libia chi s'invia,
Mentre un caldo vapor (ne sentì pria)

Da quel lato si spinge ove mi duole,
 Che forse amanti nelle lor parole
 Chiaman sospir ; io non so che si sia :
 Parte rinchiusa, e turbida si cela
 Scosso mi il petto, e poi n' uscendo poco
 Quivi d' attorno o s' agghiaccia, o s' ingiela ;
 Ma quanto a gli occhi giunge a trovar loco
 Tutte le notti a me suol far piovose
 Finche mia Alba rivien colma di rose.

VI.

GIOVANE piano, e semplicetto amante
 Poi che fuggir me stesso in dubbio sono,
 Madonna a voi del mio cuor l' humil dono
 Farò divoto ; io certo a prove tante,
 L' hebbi fedele, intrepido, costante,
 De pensieri leggiadro, accorto, e buono ;
 Quando rugge il gran mondo, e scocca il tuono,
 S' arma di se, e d' intero diamante :
 Tanto del forse, e d' invidia sicuro,
 Di timori, e speranze, al popol use,
 Quanto d' ingegno, e d' alto valor vago,
 E di cetra sonora, e delle muse :
 Sol troverete in tal parte men duro,
 Ove Amor mise l' insanabil ago.¹

VII. ON HIS BEING ARRIVED AT THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE.

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
 Stohn on his wing my three and twentieth year !
 My hasting days fly on with full career,
 But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.

¹ Cowper has very elegantly translated these sonnets.

Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
 That I to manhood am arriv'd so near ;
 And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
 That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.
 Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
 It shall be still in strictest measure even
 To that same lot, however mean or high,
 Toward which Time leads me, and the Will of Heaven ;
 All is, if I have grace to use it so,
 As ever in my great Task-Master's eye.

VIII. WHEN THE ASSAULT¹ WAS INTENDED TO THE
 CITY.

CAPTAIN, or Colonel, or Knight in arms,
 Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,
 If deed of honour did thee ever please,
 Guard them, and him within protect from harms.
 He can requite thee ; for he knows the charms
 That call fame on such gentle acts as these,
 And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas,
 Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.
 Lift not thy spear against the Muses' bower :
 The great Emathian conquerour² bid spare
 The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
 Went to the ground : And the repeated³ air
 Of sad Electra's poet had the power
 To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

¹ 'Assault : ' by Charles I., in 1642.—² 'Conquerour : ' Alexander the Great.

³ 'Repeated : ' When Lysander took Athens, it was proposed to raze the city entirely ; but a Phocian repeated some lines of Euripides which induced him to modify his sentence.

IX. TO A VIRTUOUS YOUNG LADY.

LADY, that in the prime of earliest youth
 Wisely hast shunn'd the broad way and the green,
 And with those few art eminently seen,
 That labour up the hill of heavenly truth,
 The better part with Mary and with Ruth
 Chosen thou hast ; and they that overween,
 And at thy growing virtues fret their spleen,
 No anger find in thee, but pity and ruth.
 Thy care is fix'd, and zealously attends
 To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of light,
 And hope that reaps not shame. Therefore be sure
 Thou, when the bridegroom with his feastful friends
 Passes to bliss at the mid hour of night,
 Hast gain'd thy entrance, Virgin wise and pure.

X. TO THE LADY MARGARET LEY.¹

DAUGHTER to that good Earl, once President
 Of England's Council and her Treasury,
 Who liv'd in both, unstain'd with gold or fee,
 And left them both, more in himself content,
 Till the sad breaking of that Parliament
 Broke him, as that dishonest victory
 At Chæronea, fatal to liberty,
 Kill'd with report that old man eloquent.²

¹ 'Lady Margaret Ley:' the daughter of Sir James Ley, whose singular learning and abilities raised him through all the great posts of the law, till he came to be made Earl of Marlborough, and Lord High Treasurer, and Lord President of the Council to King James I. He died in an advanced age. Milton attributes his death to *the breaking of the Parliament*; and it is true that the Parliament was dissolved the 10th of March 1628-9, and he died on the 14th of the same month. Lady Margaret was married to Captain Hobson, Isle of Wight.—² 'Old man eloquent:' Isocrates, the orator. The victory was gained by Philip of Macedon over the Athenians.

Though later born than to have known the days
 Wherein your father flourish'd, yet by you,
 Madam, methinks I see him living yet ;
 So well your words his noble virtues praise,
 That all both judge you to relate them true,
 And to possess them, honour'd Margaret.

XI. ON THE DETRACTION WHICH FOLLOWED UPON MY
 WRITING CERTAIN TREATISES.

A BOOK was writ of late call'd *Tetrachordon*,¹
 And woven close, both matter, form, and stile ;
 The subject new: it walk'd the Town a while,
 Numbering good intellects ; now seldom por'd on.
 Cries the stall-reader, Bless us ! what a word on
 A title page is this ! and some in file
 Stand spelling false, while one might walk to Mile-
 End Green. Why is it harder, Sirs, than Gordon,
 Colkitto, or Macdonnel, or Galasp ?²
 Those rugged names to our like mouths grow sleek,
 That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp.
 Thy age, like ours, O Soul of Sir John Cheek,
 Hated not learning worse than toad or asp,
 When thou taught'st Cambridge and king Edward, Greek.

¹ 'Tetrachordon:' this was one of Milton's books, published in consequence of his divorce from his first wife. *Tetrachordon* signifies Expositions on the four chief places in Scripture which mention marriage, or nullities in marriage.

—² Milton is here collecting, from his hatred to the Scots, what he thinks Scottish names of an ill sound. *Colkitto* and *Macdonnel* are one and the same person ; a brave officer on the royal side, an Irishman of the Antrim family, who served under Montrose. The *Macdonalds* of that family are styled, by way of distinction, *Mac Colcittok*, i. e., descendants of lame Colin. *Galasp*, or *George Gillespie*, was a Scottish writer against the Independents, and one of the members of the Assembly of Divines, and a right noble spirit.

—³ 'Sir John Cheek:' the first professor of the Greek tongue in the University of Cambridge, and afterwards made one of the tutors to Edward VI.

XII. ON THE SAME.

I DID but prompt the age to quit their clogs
 By the known rules of ancient liberty,
 When straight a barbarous noise environs me
 Of owls and cuckoos, asses, apes, and dogs :
 As when those hinds¹ that were transform'd to frogs
 Rail'd at Latona's² twin-born progeny,
 Which after held the sun and moon in fee.
 But this is got by casting pearl to hogs ;
 That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,
 And still revolt when truth would set them free.
 Licence they mean when they cry Liberty ;
 For who loves that, must first be wise and good ;
 But from that mark how far they rove we see,
 For all this waste of wealth, and loss of blood.

XIII. TO MR H. LAWES,³ ON THE PUBLISHING HIS
AIRS.

HARRY, whose tuneful and well-measur'd song
 First taught our English musick how to span
 Words with just note and accent, not to scan
 With Midas ears, committing⁴ short and long ;
 Thy worth and skill exempts thee from the throng,
 With praise enough for Envy to look wan ;
 To after age thou shalt be writ the man,
 That with smooth air could'st humour best our tongue.
 Thou honour'st verse, and verse must lend her wing
 To honour thee the priest of Phœbus' quire,
 That tun'st their happiest lines in hymn, or story.

¹ 'Hinds:' see Ovid, Met. lib. vi.—² 'Latona's:' Apollo and Diana.—

³ 'Lawes:' see 'Comus.'—⁴ 'Committing:' offending against rule and quantity.

Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher
 Than his Casella,¹ whom he woo'd to sing
 Met in the milder shades of Purgatory.

XIV. ON THE RELIGIOUS MEMORY OF MRS CATHERINE
 THOMSON,² MY CHRISTIAN FRIEND, DECEASED
 DECEMBER 16, 1646.

WHEN Faith and Love, which parted from thee never,
 Had ripen'd thy just soul to dwell with God,
 Meekly thou didst resign this earthly load
 Of death, call'd life ; which us from life doth sever.
 Thy works, and alms, and all thy good endeavour,
 Staid not behind, nor in the grave were trod ;
 But, as Faith pointed with her golden rod,
 Follow'd thee up to joy and bliss for ever.
 Love led them on, and Faith, who knew them best
 Thy hand-maids, clad them o'er with purple beams
 And azure wings, that up they flew so drest,
 And spake the truth of thee on glorious themes
 Before the Judge ; who thenceforth bid thee rest,
 And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.

XV. TO THE LORD GENERAL FAIRFAX.

FAIRFAX, whose name in arms through Europe rings,
 Filling each mouth with envy or with praise,
 And all her jealous monarchs with amaze
 And rumours loud, that daunt remotest kings ;
 Thy firm unshaken virtue ever brings
 Victory home, though new rebellions raise
 Their Hydra heads, and the false North displays

¹ 'Casella:' an eminent musician and friend of Dante ; see an exquisite passage in *Purg.* c. ii. v. 111.—'Mrs Thomson:' Milton, when made Latin Secretary, lodged in her house. She was a Quakeress.

Her broken league¹ to imp² their serpent wings.
 O yet a nobler task awaits thy hand,
 (For what can war but endless war still breed ?)
 Till truth and right from violence be freed,
 And publick faith clear'd from the shameful brand
 Of publick fraud. In vain doth Valour bleed,
 While Avarice and Rapine share the land.

XVI. TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL.

CROMWELL, our chief of men, who through a cloud
 Not of war only, but detractions rude,
 Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
 To peace and truth thy glorious way hast plough'd,
 And on the neck of crowned Fortune proud
 Hast rear'd God's trophies, and his work pursu'd,
 While Darwen³ stream, with blood of Scots imbru'd,
 And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,
 And Worcester's laureat wreath. Yet much remains
 To conquer still ; Peace hath her victories
 No less renown'd than War : New foes arise
 Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains :
 Help us to save free conscience from the paw
 Of hireling wolves,⁴ whose gospel is their maw.

XVII. TO SIR HENRY VANE THE YOUNGER.

VANE, young in years, but in sage counsel old,
 Than whom a better senator ne'er held
 The helm of Rome, when gowns, not arms, repell'd

¹ 'Broken league : ' the English Parliament held that the Scotch had broken their Covenant by Hamilton's march to England.—² 'Imp : ' add a new piece to the old.—³ 'Darwen : ' a river near Preston, where Cromwell routed the Scotch in August 1648.—⁴ 'Hireling wolves : ' he means the Presbyterian clergy, and the claims they made on the parochial revenues.

The fierce Epirot and the African bold ;
 Whether to settle peace, or to unfold
 The drift of hollow States¹ hard to be spell'd ;
 Then to advise how War may, best upheld,
 Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,
 In all her equipage : besides to know
 Both spiritual power and civil, what each means,
 What severs each, thou hast learn'd, which few have done :
 The bounds of either sword to thee we owe :
 Therefore on thy firm hand Religion leans
 In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son.

XVIII. ON THE LATE MASSACRE¹ IN PIEMONT.

AVENGE, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
 Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold ;
 Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
 When all our fathers worshipt stocks and stones,
 Forget not : in thy book record their groans
 Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
 Slain by the bloody Piemontese that roll'd
 Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
 The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
 To heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
 O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
 The triple Tyrant ; that from these may grow
 A hundredfold, who, having learn'd thy way,
 Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

¹ 'States:' those of Holland.—² 'The late massacre:' this was organised by the Duke of Savoy in 1655. It was very barbarous. Those who escaped fled to the mountains of Piedmont, whence they applied to Cromwell for relief. He ordered a general fast, and made a national contribution, amounting to £40,000.

XIX. ON HIS BLINDNESS.

WHEN I consider how my light is spent
 Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
 And that one talent which is death to hide,
 Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent
 To serve therewith my Maker, and present
 My true account, lest He, returning, chide ;
 "Doth God exact day-labour, light denied ?"
 I fondly ask : But Patience, to prevent
 That murmur, soon replies ; "God doth not need
 Either man's work, or his own gifts ; who best
 Bear his mild yoke, they serve Him best ; his state
 Is kingly ; thousands at his bidding speed,
 And post o'er land and ocean without rest ;
 They also serve who only stand and wait."

XX. TO MR LAWRENCE.

LAWRENCE, of virtuous father¹ virtuous son,
 Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,
 Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
 Help waste a sullen day, what may be won
 From the hard season gaining ? Time will run
 On smoother, till Favonius² re-inspire
 The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire
 The lilly and rose, that neither sow'd nor spun.
 What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,
 Of Attick taste, with wine, whence we may rise
 To hear the lute well touch'd, or artful voice
 Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air ?
 He who of those delights can judge, and spare
 To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

¹ 'The virtuous father' was Henry Lawrence, President of Cromwell's Council.—² 'Favonius : ' father of Spring.

XXI. TO CYRIACK SKINNER.¹

CYRIACK, whose grandsire, on the royal bench
Of British Themis, with no mean applause
Pronounc'd, and in his volumes taught, our laws,
Which others at their bar so often wrench ;
To-day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench
In mirth that, after, no repenting draws ;
Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,
And what the Swede² intends, and what the French.
To measure life learn thou betimes, and know
Toward solid good what leads the nearest way ;
For other things mild Heaven a time ordains,
And disapproves that care, though wise in show,
That with superfluous burden loads the day,
And, when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains.

XXII. TO THE SAME.

CYRIACK, this three years day these eyes, though clear,
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot ;
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,
Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope ; but still bear up and steer
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask ?
The conscience, Friend, to have lost them overplied
In liberty's defence, my noble task,
Of which all Europe rings from side to side.

¹ ' Skinner : ' a scholar of Milton's, and member of Harrington's political club.—² ' Swede : ' Charles Gustavus against Poland, and the French against the Spaniards.

This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask
Content though blind, had I no better guide.

XXIII. ON HIS DECEASED WIFE.¹

METHOUGHT I saw my late espoused saint
Brought to me, like Alcestis,² from the grave,
Whom Jove's great son³ to her glad husband⁴ gave,
Rescu'd from death by force, though pale and faint.
Mine, as whom wash'd from spot of child-bed taint
Purification in the old Law did save,
And such, as yet once more I trust to have
Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint,
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind :
Her face was veil'd ;⁵ yet to my fancied sight
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shin'd
So clear, as in no face with more delight.
But O, as to embrace me she inclin'd,
I wak'd ; she fled ; and day brought back my night.

¹ This sonnet was written about the year 1656, on the death of his second wife, Catharine, the daughter of Captain Woodcock of Hackney. She died in child-bed of a daughter, within a year after their marriage. Milton had now been some time totally blind.—² 'Alcestis:' see Euripides.—³ 'Great son :'
Hercules.—⁴ 'Glad husband :'
Admetus.—⁵ 'Veil'd :'
so was Alcestis.

ODES.

ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY.

I.

THIS is the month, and this the happy morn,
Wherein the Son of Heaven's Eternal King,
Of wedded Maid and Virgin Mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing,
That he our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

II.

That glorious form, that light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of majesty,
Wherewith he went at Heaven's high council-table
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside; and, here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

III.

Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant-God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain,
To welcome him to this his new abode,
Now while the heaven, by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright?

IV.

See, how from far, upon the eastern road,
 The star-led wisards haste with odours sweet ;
 O run, prevent them with thy humble ode,
 And lay it lowly at his blessed feet ;
 Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
 And join thy voice unto the Angel quire,
 From out his secret altar touch'd with hallow'd fire.

THE HYMN.

I.

It was the winter wild,
 While the heaven-born child
 All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies :
 Nature, in awe to him,
 Had doff'd her gaudy trim,
 With her great Master so to sympathize :
 It was no season then for her
 To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

II.

Only with speeches fair
 She woos the gentle air
 To hide her guilty front with innocent snow ;
 And on her naked shame,
 Pollute with sinful blame,
 The saintly veil of maiden white to throw ;
 Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
 Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

III.

But he, her fears to cease,
 Sent down the meek-ey'd Peace ;
 She, crown'd with olive green, came softly sliding
 Down through the turning sphere,
 His ready harbinger,

With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing ;
And, waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes an universal peace through sea and land.

IV.

No war, or battle's sound,
Was heard the world around :

The idle spear and shield were high up hung ;
The hooked chariot stood
Unstain'd with hostile blood ;

The trumpet spake not to the armed throng ;
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.

V.

But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of light

His reign of peace upon the earth began :
The winds with wonder whist,¹
Smoothly the waters kist,

Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.

VI.

The stars, with deep amaze,
Stand fix'd in stedfast gaze,

Bending one way their precious influence ;
And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light,

Or Lucifer that often warn'd them thence ;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow,
Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

VII.

And, though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,

¹ ' Whist : ' silenced.

The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
 And hid his head for shame,
 As his inferiour flame
 The new enlighten'd world no more should need ;
 He saw a greater sun appear
 Than his bright throne, or burning axletree, could bear.

VIII.

The shepherds on the lawn,
 Or e'er the point of dawn,
 Sat simply chatting in a rustick row ;
 Full little thought they then,
 That the mighty Pan
 Was kindly come to live with them below ;
 Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,
 Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

IX.

When such musick sweet
 Their hearts and ears did greet
 As never was by mortal finger strook ;¹
 Divinely-warbled voice
 Answering the stringed noise,
 As all their souls in blissful rapture took :
 The air, such pleasure loth to lose,
 With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

X.

Nature that heard such sound,
 Beneath the hollow round
 Of Cynthia's seat, the aery region thrilling,
 Now was almost won
 To think her part was done,
 And that her reign had here its last fulfilling ;
 She knew such harmony alone
 Could hold all Heaven and Earth in happier union.

¹ 'Strook:' struck.

XI.

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light,
That with long beams the shamefac'd night array'd ;
The helmed Cherubim,
And sworded Seraphim,
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings display'd,
Harping in loud and solemn quire,
With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's new-born Heir.

XII.

Such musick (as 'tis said)
Before was never made,
But when of old the sons of morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellations set,
And the well-balanced world on hinges hung ;
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

XIII.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres,
Once bless our human ears,
If ye have power to touch our senses so ;
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time ;
And let the bass of Heaven's deep organ blow ;
And, with your ninefold harmony,
Make up full consort to the angelick symphony.

XIV.

For, if such holy song
Enwrap our fancy long,
Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold ;
And speckled Vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
And leprous Sin will melt from earthly mould ;

And Hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

XV.

Yea, Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,
Orb'd in a rainbow ; and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between,
Thron'd in celestial sheen,

With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering ;
And Heaven, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

XVI.

But wisest Fate says no,
This must not yet be so,

The Babe yet lies in smiling infancy,
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss ;

So both himself and us to glorify :
Yet first, to those ychain'd in sleep,
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the deep ;

XVII.

With such a horrid clang
As on mount Sinai rang,

While the red fire and smouldering clouds out brake :
The aged earth aghast,
With terrour of that blast,

Shall from the surface to the center shake ;
When, at the world's last session,
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread his throne.

XVIII.

And then at last our bliss
Full and perfect is,

But now begins ; for, from this happy day,

The old Dragon, under ground
 In straiter limits bound,
 Not half so far casts his usurped sway;
 And, wroth to see his kingdom fail,
 Swindges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

XIX.

The oracles are dumb,
 No voice or hideous hum
 Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.
 Apollo from his shrine
 Can no more divine,
 With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
 No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
 Inspires the pale-ey'd priest from the prophetick cell.

XX.

The lonely mountains o'er,
 And the resounding shore,
 A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;
 From haunted spring and dale,
 Edg'd with poplar pale,
 The parting Genius is with sighing sent;
 With flower-inwoven tresses torn
 The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

XXI.

In consecrated earth,
 And on the holy hearth,
 The Lars and Lemures¹ moan with midnight plaint;
 In urns, and altars round,
 A drear and dying sound
 Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;
 And the chill marble seems to sweat,
 While each peculiar Power foregoes his wonted seat.

¹ 'Lars and Lemures:' heathen household gods.

XXII.

Peor and Baälim
 Forsake their temples dim,
 With that twice-batter'd God of Palestine ;¹
 And mooned Ashtaroth,
 Heaven's queen and mother both,
 Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine ;
 The Libyck Hammon² shrinks his horn,
 In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz³ mourn.

XXIII.

And sullen Moloch, fled,
 Hath left in shadows dread
 His burning idol all of blackest hue ;
 In vain with cymbals' ring
 They call the grisly king,
 In dismal dance about the furnace blue :
 The brutish Gods of Nile as fast,
 Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

XXIV.

Nor is Osiris seen
 In Memphian grove or green,
 Trampling the unshower'd⁴ grass with lowings loud :
 Nor can he be at rest
 Within his sacred chest ;
 Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud ;
 In vain with timbrell'd anthems dark
 The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipt ark.

XXV.

He feels from Juda's land
 The dreaded Infant's hand,
 The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn ;

¹ ' God of Palestine : ' Dagon.—² ' Hammon : ' Jupiter-Ammon.—³ ' Thammuz : ' see 1st book of ' Paradise Lost. '—⁴ ' Unshower'd : ' there being no rain in Egypt.

Nor all the gods beside
 Longer dare abide,
 Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine :
 Our Babe, to show his Godhead true,
 Can in his swaddling bands controul the damned crew.

XXVI.

So, when the sun in bed,
 Curtain'd with cloudy red,
 Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
 The flocking shadows pale
 Troop to the infernal jail,
 Each fetter'd ghost slips to his several grave ;
 And the yellow-skirted Fays
 Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-lov'd maze,

XXVII.

But see, the Virgin blest
 Hath laid her Babe to rest ;
 Time is, our tedious song should here have ending ;
 Heaven's youngest-teemed star
 Hath fix'd her polish'd car,
 Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending :
 And all about the courtly stable
 Bright-harness'd Angels sit in order serviceable.

 THE PASSION.¹

I.

EREWHILE of musick, and ethereal mirth,
 Wherewith the stage of air and earth did ring,
 And joyous news of heavenly Infant's birth,

¹ 'The Passion:' probably a college exercise, written immediately after the former—the one, perhaps, at Christmas, and the other at Easter.

My Muse with Angels did divide to sing ;
 But headlong joy is ever on the wing,
 In wintery solstice like the shorten'd light,
 Soon swallow'd up in dark and long out-living night.

II.

For now to sorrow must I tune my song,
 And set my harp to notes of saddest woe,
 Which on our dearest Lord did seize ere long,
 Dangers, and snares, and wrongs, and worse than so,
 Which he for us did freely undergo :

 Most perfect Hero, tried in heaviest plight
 Of labours huge and hard, too hard for human wight !

III.

He, sovran priest, stooping his regal head,
 That dropt with odorous oil down his fair eyes,
 Poor fleshy tabernacle entered,
 His starry front low-rooft beneath the skies :
 O, what a mask was there, what a disguise !

 Yet more ; the stroke of death he must abide,
 Then lies him meekly down fast by his brethren's side.

IV.

These latest scenes confine my roving verse ;
 To this horizon is my Phœbus bound :
 His god-like acts, and his temptations fierce,
 And former sufferings, other where are found ;
 Loud o'er the rest Cremona's¹ trump doth sound ;
 Me softer airs befit, and softer strings
 Of lute, or viol still, more apt for mournful things.

V.

Befriend me, Night, best patroness of grief ;
 Over the pole thy thickest mantle throw,
 And work my flatter'd fancy to belief,

¹ ' Cremona : ' alluding to the Italian Vida's poem, ' The Christiad.'

That Heaven and Earth are colour'd with my woe ;
My sorrows are too dark for day to know :

The leaves should all be black whereon I write,
And letters, where my tears have wash'd, a wannish white.

VI.

See, see the chariot, and those rushing wheels,
That whirl'd the Prophet up at Chebar flood,
My spirit some transporting Cherub feels,
To bear me where the towers of Salem stood,
Once glorious towers, now sunk in guiltless blood ;

There doth my soul in holy vision sit,
In pensive trance, and anguish, and ecstasick fit.

VII.

Mine eye hath found that sad sepulchral rock
That was the casket of Heaven's richest store,
And here though grief my feeble hands up lock,
Yet on the soften'd quarry would I score
My plaining verse as lively as before ;

For sure so well instructed are my tears,
That they would fitly fall in order'd characters.

VIII.

Or should I thence hurried on viewless wing
Take up a weeping on the mountains wild,
The gentle neighbourhood of grove and spring
Would soon unbosom all their echoes mild ;
And I (for grief is easily beguil'd)

Might think the infection of my sorrows loud
Had got a race of mourners on some pregnant cloud.

This subject the Author finding to be above the years he had, when he wrote
it, and nothing satisfied with what was begun, left it unfinished.

UPON THE CIRCUMCISION.

YE flaming Powers, and winged Warriours bright,
That erst with musick, and triumphant song,
First heard by happy watchful shepherds' ear,
So sweetly sung your joy the clouds along
Through the soft silence of the listening night ;
Now mourn ; and, if sad share with us to bear
Your fiery essence can distil no tear,
Burn in your sighs, and borrow
Seas wept from our deep sorrow ;
He, who with all Heaven's heraldry whilere
Enter'd the world, now bleeds to give us ease ;
Alas, how soon our sin

Sore doth begin

His infancy to seize !

O more exceeding love, or law more just ?
Just law indeed, but more exceeding love !
For we, by rightful doom remediless,
Were lost in death, till he that dwelt above,
High thron'd in secret bliss, for us frail dust
Emptied his glory, even to nakedness ;
And that great covenant which we still transgress
Entirely satisfied ;
And the full wrath beside
Of vengeful justice bore for our excess ;
And seals obedience first, with wounding smart,
This day ; but O ! ere long,
Huge pangs and strong
Will pierce more near his heart.

ON THE DEATH OF A FAIR INFANT,¹

DYING OF A COUGH.

I.

O FAIREST flower, no sooner blown but blasted,
 Soft silken primrose fading timelessly,
 Summer's chief honour, if thou hadst out-lasting
 Bleak Winter's force that made thy blossom dry ;
 For he, being amorous on that lovely dye

That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss,
 But kill'd, alas ! and then bewail'd his fatal bliss.

II.

For since grim Aquilo,² his charioteer,
 By boisterous rape the Athenian damsel got,
 He thought it touch'd his deity full near,
 If likewise he some fair one wedded not,
 Thereby to wipe away the infamous blot
 Of long-uncoupled bed and childless eld,
 Which, 'mongst the wanton gods, a foul reproach was held.

III.

So, mounting up in icy-pearled car,
 Through middle empire of the freezing air
 He wander'd long, till thee he spied from far ;
 There ended was his quest, there ceas'd his care :
 Down he descended from his snow-soft chair,

But, all unawares, with his cold-kind embrace
 Unhous'd thy virgin soul from her fair biding place.

IV.

Yet art thou not inglorious in thy fate ;
 For so Apollo, with unweeting hand,
 Whilom did slay his dearly-loved mate,

¹ 'On the Death of a Fair Infant : ' this was written when the author was seventeen. The child was a daughter of his sister Phillipps.—² 'Aquilo,' or Boreas, the north wind, ravished Orithyra; see Ovid, Met. vi.

Young Hyacinth, born on Eurotas' strand,
 Young Hyacinth, the pride of Spartan land ;
 But then transform'd him to a purple flower :
 Alack, that so to change thee Winter had no power !

V.

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,
 Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb,
 Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,
 Hid from the world in a low-delved tomb ;
 Could Heaven for pity thee so strictly doom ?

Oh no ! for something in thy face did shine
 Above mortality, that show'd thou wast divine.

VI.

Resolve me then, O Soul most surely blest,
 (If so it be that thou these complaints dost hear ;)
 Tell me, bright Spirit, where'er thou hoverest,
 Whether above that high first-moving sphere,
 Or in the Elysian fields, (if such there were ;)

Oh say me true, if thou wert mortal wight,
 And why from us so quickly thou didst take thy flight !

VII.

Wert thou some star which from the ruin'd roof
 Of shak'd Olympus by mischance didst fall ;
 Which careful Jove in Nature's true behoof
 Took up, and in fit place did reinstall ?
 Or did of late Earth's sons¹ besiege the wall

Of sheeny Heaven, and thou, some goddess, fled,
 Amongst us here below to hide thy nectar'd head ?

VIII.

Or wert thou that just Maid,² who once before
 Forsook the hated earth, O tell me sooth,
 And cam'st again to visit us once more ?

¹ 'Earth's sons : ' the Giants.—² 'Maid : ' Justice.

Or wert thou that sweet-smiling youth ?¹
Or that crown'd matron sage white-robed Truth ?
Or any other of that heavenly brood
Let down in cloudy throne to do the world some good ?

IX.

Or wert thou of the golden-winged host,
Who, having clad thyself in human weed,
To earth from thy prefixed seat didst post
And after short abode fly back with speed,
As if to show what creatures heaven doth breed ;

Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire
To scorn the sordid world, and unto heaven aspire ?

X.

But oh! why didst thou not stay here below
To bless us with thy heaven-lov'd innocence,
To slake his wrath whom sin hath made our foe,
To turn swift-rushing black Perdition hence,
Or drive away the slaughtering Pestilence,

To stand 'twixt us and our deserved smart ?
But thou canst best perform that office where thou art.

XI.

Then thou, the Mother of so sweet a Child,
Her false-imagin'd loss cease to lament,
And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild ;
Think what a present thou to God hast sent,
And render Him with patience what He lent ;

This if thou do, He will an offspring give,
That, till the world's last end, shall make thy name to live.

¹ ' Youth : ' Mercy.

ON TIME.¹

FLY, envious Time, till thou run out thy race :
Call on the lazy leaden-stepping hours,
Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace ;
And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,
Which is no more than what is false and vain,
And merely mortal dross ;
So little is our loss,
So little is thy gain !
For when as each thing bad thou hast entomb'd,
And last of all thy greedy self consum'd,
Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss
With an individual² kiss ;
And Joy shall overtake us as a flood,
When every thing that is sincerely good
And perfectly divine,
With Truth, and Peace, and Love, shall ever shine
About the supreme throne
Of Him, to whose happy-making sight alone
When once our heavenly-guided soul shall clime ;
Then, all this earthly grossness quit,
Attir'd with stars, we shall for ever sit,
Triumphing over Death, and Chance, and thee, O Time !

¹ 'On Time:' this was meant to be set on a clock-case.—² 'Individual:' inseparable.

AT A SOLEMN MUSICK.

BLEST pair of Syrens, pledges of Heaven's joy,
Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
Wed your divine sounds, and mix'd power employ,
Dead things with inbreath'd sense able to pierce ;
And to our high-rais'd phantasy present
That undisturbed song of pure concent,
Aye sung before the sapphire-colour'd throne
To Him that sits thereon,
With saintly shout, and solemn jubilee ;
Where the bright Seraphim, in burning row,
Their loud up-lifted angel-trumpets blow ;
And the Cherubick host, in thousand quires,
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
With those just Spirits that wear victorious palms,
Hymns devout and holy psalms
Singing everlastingly :
That we on earth, with undiscording voice,
May rightly answer that melodious noise ;
As once we did, till disproportion'd sin
Jarr'd against Nature's chime, and with harsh din
Broke the fair musick that all creatures made
To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd
In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
In first obedience, and their state of good.
O, may we soon again renew that song,
And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long
To his celestial concert us unite,
To live with him, and sing in endless morn of light !

AN EPITAPH

ON THE MARCHIONESS OF WINCHESTER.¹

THIS rich marble doth inter
 The honour'd wife of Winchester,
 A Viscount's daughter, an Earl's heir,
 Besides what her virtues fair
 Added to her noble birth,
 More than she could own from earth.
 Summers three times eight save one
 She had told ; alas ! too soon,
 After so short time of breath,
 To house with darkness, and with death.
 Yet had the number of her days
 Been as complete as was her praise,
 Nature and Fate had had no strife
 In giving limit to her life.

Her high birth, and her graces sweet,
 Quickly found a lover meet ;
 The virgin quire for her request
 The god that sits at marriage feast ;
 He at their invoking came,
 But with a scarce well-lighted flame ;
 And in his garland, as he stood,
 Ye might discern a cypress bud.
 Once had the early matrons run
 To greet her of a lovely son,
 And now with second hope she goes,
 And calls Lucina² to her throes :

¹ ' Marchioness of Winchester : ' she was Lady Jane Savage, daughter of Lord Savage, and married to the Marquis of Winchester, on whom Dryden wrote an epitaph. She died in child-birth of a second son. Milton knew her through his acquaintance with the Egerton family. He wrote this at Cambridge.

² ' Lucina : ' goddess of midwives.

But, whether by mischance or blame,
Atropos¹ for Lucina came ;
And with remorseless cruelty
Spoil'd at once both fruit and tree :
The hapless babe, before his birth,
Had burial, yet not laid in earth ;
And the languish'd mother's womb
Was not long a living tomb.

So have I seen some tender slip,
Sav'd with care from winter's nip,
The pride of her carnation train,
Pluck'd up by some unheedy swain,
Who only thought to crop the flower
New shot up from vernal shower ;
But the fair blossom hangs the head
Side-ways, as on a dying bed,
And those pearls of dew, she wears,
Prove to be presaging tears,
Which the sad morn had let fall
On her hastening funeral.

Gentle Lady, may thy grave
Peace and quiet ever have ;
After this thy travel sore
Sweet rest seize thee evermore,
That, to give the world encrease,
Shorten'd hast thy own life's lease.
Here, besides the sorrowing
That thy noble house doth bring,
Here be tears of perfect moan
Wept for thee in Helicon ;
And some flowers, and some bays,
For thy herse, to strew the ways,

¹ ' Atropos : ' the Fate who presides over death.

Sent thee from the banks of Came,
 Devoted to thy virtuous name ;
 Whilst thou, bright Saint, high sitt'st in glory,
 Next her, much like to thee in story,
 That fair Syrian shepherdess,¹
 Who, after years of barrenness,
 The highly favour'd Joseph bore
 To him that serv'd for her before,
 And at her next birth, much like thee,
 Through pangs fled to felicity,
 Far within the bosom bright
 Of blazing Majesty and Light :
 There with thee, new welcome Saint,
 Like fortunes may her soul acquaint,
 With thee there clad in radiant sheen,
 No Marchioness, but now a Queen.

SONG ON MAY MORNING.

Now the bright Morning-star, day's harbinger,
 Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
 The flowery May, who from her green lap throws
 The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.
 Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire
 Mirth, and youth, and warm desire ;
 Woods and groves are of thy dressing,
 Hill, and dale, doth boast thy blessing !
 Thus we salute thee with our early song,
 And welcome thee, and wish thee long.

¹ ' Shepherdess : ' Rachel.

MISCELLANIES.

Anno Ætatis 19, at a VACATION EXERCISE in the COLLEGE, part Latin, part English. The Latin speeches ended, the English thus began.

HAIL, native Language, that by sinews weak
Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak,
And mad'st imperfect words with childish trips,
Half unpronounc'd, slide through my infant-lips,
Driving dumb Silence from the portal door,
Where he had mutely sat two years before !
Here I salute thee, and thy pardon ask,
That now I use thee in my latter task :
Small loss it is that thence can come unto thee,
I know my tongue but little grace can do thee :
Thou need'st not be ambitious to be first,
Believe me I have thither pack'd the worst :
And, if it happen as I did forecast,
The daintiest dishes shall be serv'd up last.
I pray thee then deny me not thy aid
For this same small neglect that I have made :
But haste thee straight to do me once a pleasure,
And from thy wardrobe bring thy chiefest treasure,
Not those new-fangled toys,¹ and trimming slight
Which takes our late fantasticks with delight ;

¹ 'New-fangled toys:' he alludes to Lilly's Euphuës and the then fashionable affectation of Euphuism; see Scott's 'Monastery.'

But cull those richest robes, and gay'st attire,
Which deepest spirits and choicest wits desire :
I have some naked thoughts that rove about,
And loudly knock to have their passage out ;
And, weary of their place, do only stay,
Till thou hast deck'd them in thy best array ;
That so they may, without suspect or fears,
Fly swiftly to this fair assembly's ears ;
Yet I had rather, if I were to chuse,
Thy service in some graver subject use,
Such as may make thee search thy coffers round,
Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound :
Such where the deep transported mind may soar
Above the wheeling poles, and at Heaven's door
Look in, and see each blissful Deity
How he before the thunderous throne doth lie,
Listening to what unshorn Apollo sings
To the touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings
Immortal nectar to her kingly sire :
Then passing through the spheres of watchful fire,
And misty regions of wide air next under,
And hills of snow, and lofts of piled thunder,
May tell at length how green-eyed Neptune raves,
In Heaven's defiance mustering all his waves ;
Then sing of secret things that came to pass
When beldam Nature in her cradle was ;
And last of kings, and queens, and heroes old,
Such as the wise Demodocus¹ once told
In solemn songs at king Alcinous' feast,
While sad Ulysses' soul, and all the rest,
Are held, with his melodious harmony,
In willing chains and sweet captivity.

¹ ' Demodocus : ' a blind bard mentioned in the ' Odyssey.'

But fie, my wandering Muse, how thou dost stray!
 Expectance calls thee now another way;
 Thou know'st it must be now thy only bent
 To keep in compass of thy predicament:
 Then quick about thy purpos'd business come,
 That to the next I may resign my room.

*Then ENS is represented as Father of the PREDICAMENTS
 his ten Sons, whereof the eldest stood for SUBSTANCE
 with his Canons; which ENS, thus speaking, explains.*

GOOD luck befriend thee, Son; for at thy birth,
 The faery ladies danc'd upon the hearth;
 Thy drowsy nurse hath sworn she did them spie
 Come tripping to the room where thou didst lie,
 And, sweetly singing round about thy bed,
 Strew all their blessings on thy sleeping head.
 She heard them give thee this, that thou shouldst still
 From eyes of mortals walk invisible:
 Yet there is something that doth force my fear;
 For once it was my dismal hap to hear
 A Sibyl old, bow-bent with crooked age,
 That far events full wisely could presage,
 And, in Time's long and dark prospective glass,
 Foresaw what future days should bring to pass;
 "Your son," said she, "(nor can you it prevent),
 Shall subject be to many an Accident.
 O'er all his brethren he shall reign as king,
 Yet every one shall make him underling;
 And those, that cannot live from him asunder,
 Ungratefully shall strive to keep him under;
 In worth and excellence he shall out-go them,
 Yet, being above them, he shall be below them;

¹ 'Ens,' &c. : scholastic terms personified.

From others he shall stand in need of nothing,
 Yet on his brothers shall depend for clothing.
 To find a foe it shall not be his hap,
 And Peace shall lull him in her flowery lap ;
 Yet shall he live in strife, and at his door
 Devouring War shall never cease to roar ;
 Yea, it shall be his natural property
 To harbour those that are at enmity.
 What power, what force, what mighty spell, if not
 Your learned hands, can loose this Gordian knot ?”

*The next, QUANTITY and QUALITY, spake in Prose ; then
 RELATION was called by his name.*

RIVERS, arise ; whether thou be the son
 Of utmost Tweed, or Oose, or gulphy Dun,
 Or Trent, who, like some Earth-born giant, spreads
 His thirty arms along the indented meads ;
 Or sullen Mole,¹ that runneth underneath ;
 Or Severn swift, guilty² of maiden's death ;
 Or rocky Avon, or of sedgy Lee,
 Or coaly Tine, or ancient hallow'd Dee ;³
 Or Humber⁴ loud, that keeps the Scythian's name ;
 Or Medway smooth, or royal-tower'd Thame.

[*The rest was Prose.*]

¹ ‘Mole :’ a river in Surrey, which sinks in summer into a subterranean channel. — ² ‘Guilty :’ the maiden is Sabrina ; see ‘Comus.’ — ³ ‘Dee :’ the river of the Druids, held sacred. — ⁴ ‘Humber’ was a Scythian king drowned in the river.

AN EPITAPH¹

ON THE ADMIRABLE DRAMATICK POET W. SHAKSPEARE.

WHAT needs my Shakspeare, for his honour'd bones,
 The labour of an age in piled stones ?
 Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid
 Under a star-ypointing pyramid ?
 Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
 What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name ?
 Thou, in our wonder and astonishment,
 Hast built thyself a live-long monument.
 For whilst, to the shame of slow-endeavouring art,
 Thy easy numbers flow ; and that each heart
 Hath, from the leaves of thy unvalued² book,
 Those Delphick lines with deep impression took ;
 Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
 Dost make us marble with too much conceiving ;
 And, so sepúlcher'd, in such pomp dost lie,
 That kings, for such a tomb, would wish to die.

ON THE UNIVERSITY CARRIER,

WHO SICKENED IN THE TIME OF HIS VACANCY ; BEING FORBID TO GO TO
 LONDON, BY REASON OF THE PLAGUE.

HERE lies old Hobson ;³ Death hath broke his girt,
 And here, alas ! hath laid him in the dirt ;
 Or else, the ways being foul, twenty to one,
 He's here stuck in a slough, and overthrown.

¹ 'An Epitaph : ' the first of Milton's pieces published.—² 'Unvalued : ' invaluable.—³ 'Hobson : ' he put up at the Bull in Bishopsgate Street. He died in 1630.

'Twas such a shifter, that, if truth were known,
Death was half glad when he had got him down ;
For he had, any time this ten years full,
Dodg'd with him betwixt Cambridge and *The Bull*.
And surely Death could never have prevail'd,
Had not his weekly course of carriage fail'd ;
But lately finding him so long at home,
And thinking now his journey's end was come,
And that he had ta'en up his latest inn,
In the kind office of a chamberlin¹
Show'd him his room where he must lodge that night,
Pull'd off his boots, and took away the light :
If any ask for him, it shall be said,
"Hobson has supt, and's newly gone to bed."

ANOTHER ON THE SAME.

HERE lieth one, who did most truly prove
That he could never die while he could move ;
So hung his destiny, never to rot
While he might still jog on and keep his trot,
Made of sphere-metal, never to decay
Until his revolution was at stay.
Time numbers motion, yet (without a crime
'Gainst old truth) motion number'd out his time :
And, like an engine, mov'd with wheel and weight,
His principles being ceas'd, he ended straight.
Rest, that gives all men life, gave him his death,
And too much breathing put him out of breath ;
Nor were it contradiction to affirm,
Too long vacation hasten'd on his term.

¹ 'Chamberlin : ' the ancient Boots.

Merely to drive the time away he sicken'd,
Fainted, and died, nor would with ale be quicken'd ;
“Nay,” quoth he, on his swooning bed out-stretch'd,
“If I mayn't carry, sure I'll ne'er be fetch'd,
“But vow, though the cross doctors all stood hearers,
“For one carrier put down to make six bearers.”
Ease was his chief disease ; and, to judge right,
He died for heaviness that his cart went light :
His leisure told him that his time was come,
And lack of load made his life burdensome,
That even to his last breath (there be that say't),
As he were press'd to death, he cried, More weight :
But, had his doings lasted as they were,
He had been an immortal carrier.
Obedient to the moon he spent his date
In course reciprocal, and had his fate
Link'd to the mutual flowing of the seas,
Yet (strange to think) his *wain* was his *encrease* :
His letters are deliver'd all and gone,
Only remains this superscription.

ON THE NEW FORCERS OF CONSCIENCE

UNDER THE LONG PARLIAMENT.

BECAUSE you have thrown off your Prelate Lord,
 And with stiff vows renounc'd his Liturgy,
 To seize the widow'd whore Plurality
 From them whose sin ye envied, not abhorr'd ;
 Dare ye for this adjure the civil sword
 To force our consciences that Christ set free,
 And ride us with a classick¹ hierarchy
 Taught ye by mere A. S.² and Rotherford ?³
 Men, whose life, learning, faith, and pure intent,
 Would have been held in high esteem with Paul,
 Must now be nam'd and printed Hereticks
 By shallow Edwards⁴ and Scotch what d'ye call :⁵
 But we do hope to find out all your tricks,
 Your plots and packing worse than those of Trent,
 That so the Parliament
 May, with their wholesome and preventive shears,
 Clip your phylacteries, though bauk⁶ your ears,
 And succour our just fears,
 When they shall read this clearly in your charge,
 New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large.

¹ 'Classick : ' referring to the classes, including the parochial presbyteries into which England was divided.—² 'A. S. : ' Adam Steuart, a divine of the Church of Scotland, and the author of several polemical tracts, some portions of which commence with A. S. only prefixed. — ³ 'Samuel Rotherford,' or Rutherford, one of the chief commissioners of the Church of Scotland, and professor of divinity in the University of St Andrews. He was a great genius, but disliked by Milton for his aversion to Independency. Who has not heard of his 'Letters' ? ⁴ 'Thomas Edwards,' minister : a pamphleteering opponent of Milton, whose plan of Independency he assailed.—⁵ 'What d'ye call : ' perhaps Henderson, or Gillespie, Scotch divines.—⁶ 'Bauk : ' spare.

TRANSLATIONS.

THE FIFTH ODE OF HORACE, LIB. I.

WHAT slender youth, bedew'd with liquid odours,
Courts thee on roses in some pleasant cave,
Pyrrha? For whom bind'st thou
In wreaths thy golden hair,
Plain in thy neatness? O, how oft shall he
On faith and changed gods complain, and seas
Rough with black winds, and storms
Unwonted shall admire!
Who now enjoys thee credulous, all gold,
Who always vacant, always amiable
Hopes thee, of flattering gales
Unmindful. Hapless they,
To whom thou untried seem'st fair! Me, in my vow'd
Picture, the sacred wall declares to have hung
My dank and dropping weeds
To the stern God of sea.

FROM GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH.

BRUTUS thus addresses DIANA in the country of LEOGECIA.

GODDESS of shades, and huntress, who at will
Walk'st on the rowling spheres, and through the deep;

On thy third reign, the earth, look now, and tell
 What land, what seat of rest, thou bidst me seek,
 What certain seat, where I may worship thee
 For aye, with temples vow'd and virgin quires.

To whom, sleeping before the Altar, DIANA answers in a Vision the same Night.

BRUTUS, far to the west, in the ocean wide,
 Beyond the realm of Gaul, a land there lies,
 Sea-girt it lies, where giants dwelt of old :
 Now void, it fits thy people : Thither bend
 Thy course ; there shalt thou find a lasting seat ;
 There to thy sons another Troy shall rise,
 And kings be born of thee, whose dreadful might
 Shall awe the world, and conquer nations bold.

FROM DANTE.

AH, Constantine, of how much ill was cause,
 Not thy conversion, but those rich domains
 That the first wealthy pope receiv'd of thee !

FROM DANTE.

FOUNDED in chaste and humble poverty,
 'Gainst them that rais'd thee dost thou lift thy horn,
 Impudent whore ? where hast thou plac'd thy hope ?
 In thy adulterers, or thy ill-got wealth ?
 Another Constantine comes not in haste.

FROM ARIOSTO.

THEN pass'd he to a flowery mountain green,
 Which once smelt sweet, now stinks as odiously :
 This was the gift, if you the truth will have,
 That Constantine to good Sylvester gave.

FROM HORACE.

WHOM do we count a good man ? Whom but he
Who keeps the laws and statutes of the senate,
Who judges in great suits and controversies,
Whose witness and opinion wins the cause ?
But his own house, and the whole neighbourhood,
Sees his foul inside through his whited skin.

FROM EURIPIDES.

THIS is true liberty, when freeborn men,
Having to advise the publick, may speak free ;
Which he who can, and will, deserves high praise ;
Who neither can, nor will, may hold his peace ;
What can be juster in a state than this ?

FROM HORACE.

———— LAUGHING, to teach the truth,
What hinders ? As some teachers give to boys
Junkets and knacks, that they may learn apace.

FROM HORACE.

———— JOKING decides great things,
Stronger and better oft than earnest can.

FROM SOPHOCLES.

'Tis you that say it, not I. You do the deeds,
And your ungodly deeds find me the words.

FROM SENECA.

———— THERE can be slain
No sacrifice to God more acceptable,
Than an unjust and wicked king.

PSALMS.

PSALM I. *Done into Verse, 1653.*

BLESS'D is the man who hath not walk'd astray
In counsel of the wicked, and i' the way
Of sinners hath not stood, and in the seat
Of scorers hath not sat. But in the great
Jehovah's law is ever his delight,
And in his law he studies day and night.
He shall be as a tree which planted grows
By watery streams, and in his season knows
To yield his fruit, and his leaf shall not fall,
And what he takes in hand shall prosper all.
Not so the wicked, but as chaff which fann'd
The wind drives, so the wicked shall not stand
In judgement, or abide their trial then,
Nor sinners in the assembly of just men.
For the Lord knows the upright way of the just,
And the way of bad men to ruin must.

PSALM II. *Done Aug. 8, 1653. TERZETTI.*

WHY do the Gentiles tumult, and the Nations
Muse a vain thing, the kings of the earth upstand
With power, and princes in their congregations
Lay deep their plots together through each land
Against the Lord and his Messiah dear?
Let us break off, say they, by strength of hand

Their bonds, and cast from us, no more to wear,
Their twisted cords: He, who in heaven doth dwell,
Shall laugh; the Lord shall scoff them; then, severe,
Speak to them in his wrath, and in his fell
And fierce ire trouble them; but I, saith he,
Anointed have my King (though ye rebel)
On Sion my holy hill. A firm decree
I will declare: The Lord to me hath said,
Thou art my Son, I have begotten thee
This day; ask of me, and the grant is made;
As thy possession I on thee bestow
The Heathen; and, as thy conquest to be sway'd,
Earth's utmost bounds: them shalt thou bring full low
With iron scepter bruis'd, and them disperse
Like to a potter's vessel shiver'd so.
And now be wise at length, ye kings averse;
Be taught, ye Judges of the earth; with fear
Jehovah serve, and let your joy converse
With trembling; kiss the Son, lest he appear
In anger, and ye perish in the way,
If once his wrath take fire, like fuel sere.
Happy all those who have in him their stay!

PSALM III. *Aug. 9, 1653.*

WHEN HE FLED FROM ABSALOM.

LORD, how many are my foes!
How many those,
That in arms against me rise!
Many are they,
That of my life distrustfully thus say;
No help for him in God there lies.

But thou, Lord, art my shield, my glory,
Thee, through my story,
The exalter of my head I count :
Aloud I cried
Unto Jehovah: He full soon replied,
And heard me from his holy mount.

I lay and slept ; I wak'd again ;
For my sustain
Was the Lord. Of many millions
The populous rout
I fear not, though, encamping round about,
They pitch against me their pavilions.

Rise, Lord ; save me, my God ; for thou
Hast smote ere now
On the cheek-bone all my foes,
Of men abhorr'd
Hast broke the teeth. This help was from the Lord ;
Thy blessing on thy people flows.

PSALM IV. *Aug. 10, 1653.*

ANSWER me when I call,
God of my righteousness ;
In straits, and in distress,
Thou didst me disenthral
And set at large ; now spare,
Now pity me, and hear my earnest prayer.
Great ones, how long will ye
My glory have in scorn ?

How long be thus forborn
Still to love vanity ?
To love, to seek, to prize,
Things false and vain, and nothing else but lies ?
Yet know the Lord hath chose,
Chose to himself apart,
The good and meek of heart ;
(For whom to choose He knows)
Jehovah from on high

Will hear my voice, what time to him I cry.
Be aw'd, and do not sin ;
Speak to your hearts alone,
Upon your beds, each one,
And be at peace within.
Offer the offerings just

Of righteousness, and in Jehovah trust.
Many there be that say,
Who yet will show us good ?
Talking like this world's brood ;
But, Lord, thus let me pray ;
On us lift up the light,

Lift up the favour of thy countenance bright.
Into my heart more joy
And gladness thou hast put,
Than when a year of glut
Their stores doth over-cloy,
And from their plenteous grounds

With vast encrease their corn and wine abounds.
In peace at once will I
Both lay me down and sleep ;
For thou alone dost keep
Me safe where'er I lie.
As in a rocky cell

Thou, Lord, alone, in safety mak'st me dwell.

PSALM V. *Aug. 12, 1653.*

JEHOVAH, to my words give ear,
My meditation weigh ;
The voice of my complaining hear,
My King and God ; for unto thee I pray.
Jehovah, thou my early voice
Shalt in the morning hear ;
I' the morning I to thee with choice
Will rank my prayers, and watch till thou appear.
For thou art not a God that takes
In wickedness delight ;
Evil with thee no biding makes ;
Fools or mad men stand not within thy sight.
All workers of iniquity
Thou hat'st ; and them unblest
Thou wilt destroy that speak a lie ;
The bloody and guileful man God doth detest.
But I will, in thy mercies dear,
Thy numerous mercies, go
Into thy house ; I, in thy fear,
Will towards thy holy temple worship low.
Lord, lead me in thy righteousness,
Lead me, because of those
That do observe if I transgress ;
Set thy ways right before, where my step goes.
For, in his faltering mouth unstable,
No word is firm or sooth ;
Their inside, troubles miserable ;
An open grave their throat, their tongue they smooth.
God, find them guilty, let them fall
By their own counsels quell'd ;
Push them in their rebellions all
Still on ; for against thee they have rebell'd.

Then all, who trust in thee, shall bring
Their joy ; while thou from blame
Defend'st them, they shall ever sing
And shall triumph in thee, who love thy Name.
For thou, Jehovah, wilt be found
To bless the just man still ;
As with a shield, thou wilt surround
Him with thy lasting favour and good will.

PSALM VI. *Aug. 13, 1653.*

LORD, in thine anger do not reprehend me,
Nor in thy hot displeasure me correct ;
Pity me, Lord, for I am much deject,
And very weak and faint ; heal and amend me :
For all my bones, that even with anguish ake,
Are troubled, yea my soul is troubled sore ;
And thou, O Lord, how long ? Turn, Lord ; restore
My soul ; O save me for thy goodness' sake :
For in death no remembrance is of thee ;
Who in the grave can celebrate thy praise ?
Wearied I am with sighing out my days ;
Nightly my couch I make a kind of sea ;
My bed I water with my tears ; mine eye
Through grief consumes, is waxen old and dark
I' the midst of all mine enemies that mark.
Depart, all ye that work iniquity,
Depart from me ; for the voice of my weeping
The Lord hath heard ; the Lord hath heard my pray'r ;
My supplication with acceptance fair
The Lord will own, and have me in his keeping.

(His arrows purposely made he
For them that persecute.) Behold,
He travels big with vanity ;
Trouble he hath conceiv'd of old,
As in a womb ; and from that mould
Hath at length brought forth a lie.

He digg'd a pit, and delv'd it deep,
And fell into the pit he made ;
His mischief, that due course doth keep,
Turns on his head ; and his ill trade
Of violence will, undelay'd,
Fall on his crown with ruin steep.

Then will I Jehovah's praise
According to his justice raise,
And sing the Name and Deity
Of Jehovah the Most High.

PSALM VIII. *Aug. 14, 1653.*

O JEHOVAH our Lord, how wonderful great
And glorious is thy Name through all the earth !
So as above the heavens thy praise to set
Out of the tender mouths of latest birth.

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou
Hast founded strength, because of all thy foes,
To stint the enemy, and slack the avenger's brow,
That bends his rage thy Providence to oppose.

When I behold thy heavens, thy fingers' art,
 The moon, and stars, which thou so bright hast set
 In the pure firmament ; then saith my heart,
 O, what is man that thou remember'st yet,

And think'st upon him ? or of man begot,
 That him thou visit'st, and of him art found ?
 Scarce to be less than gods, thou mad'st his lot,
 With honour and with state thou hast him crown'd.

O'er the works of thy hand thou mad'st him Lord,
 Thou hast put all under his lordly feet ;
 All flocks, and herds, by thy commanding word,
 All beasts that in the field or forest meet,

Fowl of the heavens, and fish that through the wet
 Sea-paths in shoals do slide, and know no dearth.
 O Jehovah our Lord, how wonderful great
 And glorious is thy Name through all the earth !

April 1648. J. M.

Nine of the Psalms done into metre ; wherein all, but what is in a different character, are the very words of the text, translated from the original.

PSALM LXXX.

1 THOU Shepherd, that dost Israel *keep*,
 Give ear *in time of need* ;
 Who ledest like a flock of sheep
Thy loved Joseph's seed ;

That sitt'st between the Cherubs *bright*,
Between their wings out-spread;
Shine forth, and from thy cloud give light,
And on our foes thy dread.

2 In Ephraim's view and Benjamin's,
And in Mannasse's sight,
Awake thy strength, come, and *be seen*
To save us *by thy might*.

3 Turn us again, *thy grace divine*
To us, O God, *vouchsafe*;
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.

4 Lord God of Hosts, how long wilt thou,
How long wilt thou declare
Thy smoking wrath, and *angry brow*
Against thy people's prayer!

5 Thou feed'st them with the bread of tears :
Their bread with tears they eat ;
And mak'st them largely drink the tears
Wherewith their cheeks are wet.

6 A strife thou mak'st us *and a prey*
To every neighbour foe ;
Among themselves they laugh, they play,
And flouts at us they throw.

7 Return us, *and thy grace divine*,
O God of Hosts, *vouchsafe*;
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.

- 8 A vine from Egypt thou hast brought,
 Thy free love made it thine,
And drov'st out nations, *proud and haut,*
 To plant this *lovely* vine.
- 9 Thou didst prepare for it a place,
 And root it deep and fast,
That it *began to grow apace,*
 And fill'd the land at last.
- 10 With her *green* shade that cover'd all,
 The hills were *over-spread*;
Her boughs as *high as* cedars tall
 Advanc'd their lofty head.
- 11 Her branches *on the western side*
 Down to the sea she sent,
And *upward* to that river *wide*
 Her other branches *went.*
- 12 Why hast thou laid her hedges low,
 And broken down her fence,
That all may pluck her, as they go,
 With rudest violence?
- 13 The *tusked* boar out of the wood
 Up turns it by the roots;
Wild beasts there brouse, and make their food
 Her grapes and tender shoots.
- 14 Return now, God of Hosts, look down
 From Heaven, thy seat divine;
Behold us, *but without a frown,*
 And visit this *thy* vine.

- 15 Visit this vine, which thy right hand
Hath set, and planted *long*,
And the young branch, that for thyself
Thou hast made firm and strong.
- 16 But now it is consum'd with fire,
And cut *with axes* down;
They perish at thy dreadful ire,
At thy rebuke and frown.
- 17 Upon the man of thy right hand
Let thy *good* hand be *laid*;
Upon the son of man, whom thou
Strong for thyself hast made.
- 18 So shall we not go back from thee
To ways of sin and shame;
Quickened us thou; then *gladly* we
Shall call upon thy Name.
- 19 Return us, *and thy grace divine*,
Lord God of Hosts, *vouchsafe*;
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.
-

PSALM LXXXI.

- 1 To God our strength sing loud, *and clear*,
Sing loud to God *our King*;
To Jacob's God, *that all may hear*,
Loud acclamations ring.

- 2 Prepare a hymn, prepare a song,
The timbrel hither bring ;
The *cheerful* psaltery bring along,
And harp *with* pleasant string.
- 3 Blow, *as is wont*, in the new moon
With trumpets' *lofty* sound,
The appointed time, the day whereon
Our solemn feast *comes round*.
- 4 This was a statute *given of old*
For Israel *to observe* ;
A law of Jacob's God, *to hold*,
From whence they might not swerve.
- 5 This he a testimony ordain'd
In Joseph, *not to change*,
When as he pass'd through Egypt land ;
The tongue I heard was strange.
- 6 From burden, *and from slavish toil*,
I set his shoulder free :
His hands from pots, *and miry soil*,
Deliver'd were *by me*.
- 7 When trouble did thee sore assail,
On me then didst thou call ;
And I to free thee *did not fail*,
And led thee out of thrall.
- I answer'd thee in thunder deep,
With clouds encompass'd round ;
I tried thee at the water steep
Of Meriba *renoun'd*.

- 8 Hear, O my people, *hearken well* ;
I testify to thee,
Thou ancient stock of Israel,
If thou wilt list to me :
- 9 Throughout the land of thy abode
No alien God shall be,
Nor shalt thou to a foreign God
In honour bend thy knee.
- 10 I am the Lord thy God, which brought
Thee out of Egypt land ;
Ask large enough, and I, *besought,*
Will grant thy full demand.
- 11 And yet my people would not *hear,*
Nor hearken to my voice ;
And Israel, *whom I lov'd so dear,*
Mislik'd me for his choice.
- 12 Then did I leave them to their will,
And to their wandering mind ;
Their own conceits they follow'd still,
Their own devices blind.
- 13 O, that my people would *be wise,*
To serve me all their days !
And O, that Israel would *advise*
To walk my righteous ways !
- 14 Then would I soon bring down their foes,
That now so proudly rise ;
And turn my hand against *all those,*
That are their enemies.

15 Who hate the Lord should *then be fain*
 To bow to him and bend ;
But *they, his people, should remain,*
 Their time should have no end.

16 And he would feed them *from the shock*
 With flower of finest wheat,
And satisfy them from the rock
 With honey *for their meat.*

PSALM LXXXII.

1 God in the great assembly stands
 Of kings and lordly states ;
Among the gods, on both his hands,
 He judges and debates.

2 How long will ye pervert the right
 With judgement false and wrong,
Favouring the wicked *by your might,*
 Who thence grow bold and strong ?

3 Regard the weak and fatherless,
 Despatch the poor man's cause ;
And raise the man in deep distress
 By just and equal laws.

4 Defend the poor and desolate,
 And rescue from the hands
Of wicked men the low estate
 Of him that *help demands.*

- 5 They know not, nor will understand,
In darkness they walk on ;
The earth's foundations all are mov'd,
And out of order gone.
- 6 I said that ye were gods, yea all
The sons of God Most High ;
- 7 But ye shall die like men, and fall,
As other princes *die*.
- 8 Rise, God ; judge thou the earth *in might*,
This *wicked* earth redress ;
For Thou art He who shall by right
The nations all possess.
-

PSALM LXXXIII.

- 1 BE not thou silent *now at length*,
O God, hold not thy peace ;
Sit thou not still, O God of *strength*,
We cry, and do not cease.
- 2 For lo, thy *furious* foes *now* swell,
And storm outrageously ;
And they that hate thee, *proud and fell*,
Exalt their heads full high.
- 3 Against thy people they contrive
Their plots and counsels deep ;
Them to ensnare they chiefly strive,
Whom thou dost hide and keep.

- 4 Come, let us cut them off, say they,
Till they no nation be ;
That Israel's name for ever may
Be lost in memory.
- 5 For they consult with all their might,
And all, as one in mind,
Themselves against thee they unite,
And in firm union bind.
- 6 The tents of Edom, and the brood
Of scornful Ishmael,
Moab, with them of Hagar's blood,
That in the desert dwell ;
- 7 Gebal and Ammon *there conspire,*
And *hateful* Amalec,
The Philistines, and they of Tyre,
Whose bounds the sea doth check.
- 8 With them *great* Ashur also bands,
And doth confirm the knot :
All these have lent their armed hands
To aid the sons of Lot.
- 9 Do to them as to Midian *bold,*
That wasted all the coast ;
To Sisera ; and, as is told,
Thou didst to Jabin's host,
- When, at the brook of Kishon old,*
They were repuls'd and slain,
- 10 At Endor quite cut off, and roll'd
As dung upon the plain.

- 11 As Zeb and Oreb evil sped,
So let their princes speed ;
As Zeba and Zalmunna *bled*,
So let their princes *bleed*.
- 12 *For they amidst their pride* have said,
By right now shall we seize
God's houses, and *will now invade*
Their stately palaces.
- 13 My God, oh make them as a wheel,
No quiet let them find ;
Giddy and *restless* let *them reel*,
Like stubble from the wind.
- 14 As *when an aged* wood takes fire
Which on a sudden strays,
The *greedy* flame runs higher and higher
Till all the mountains blaze ;
- 15 So with thy whirlwind them pursue,
And with thy tempest chase ;
- 16 And till they yield thee honour due,
Lord, fill with shame their face.
- 17 Asham'd, and troubled, let them be,
Troubled, and sham'd for ever ;
Ever confounded, and so die
With shame, *and 'scape it never*.
- 18 Then shall they know, that Thou, whose Name
Jehovah is alone,
Art the Most High, *and Thou the same*
O'er all the earth *art One*.

PSALM LXXXIV.

1 How lovely are thy dwellings fair !
O Lord of Hosts, how dear
The *pleasant* tabernacles are,
Where thou dost dwell so near !

2 My soul doth long and almost die
Thy courts, O Lord, to see ;
My heart and flesh aloud do cry,
O living God, for thee.

3 There even the sparrow, *freed from wrong,*
Hath found a house of *rest* ;
The swallow there, to lay her young,
Hath built her *brooding* nest ;

Even by thy altars, Lord of Hosts,
They find their safe abode ;
And home they fly from round the coasts
Toward thee, my King, my God.

4 Happy, who in thy house reside,
Where thee they ever praise !
5 Happy, whose strength in thee doth bide,
And in their hearts thy ways !

6 They pass through Baca's *thirsty* vale,
That dry and barren ground ;
As through a fruitful watery dale,
Where springs and showers abound.

- 7 They journey on from strength to strength
 With joy and gladsome cheer,
 Till all before our God at length
 In Sion do appear.
- 8 Lord God of Hosts, hear *now* my prayer,
 O Jacob's God give ear ;
- 9 Thou God, our shield, look on the face
 Of thy anointed *dear*.
- 10 For one day in thy courts *to be*
 Is better, *and more blest,*
 Than *in the joys of vanity*
 A thousand days *at best*.
- I, in the temple of my God,
 Had rather keep a door,
 Than dwell in tents, *and rich abode,*
 With sin *for evermore*.
- 11 For God the Lord, both sun and shield,
 Gives grace and glory *bright* ;
 No good from them shall be withheld
 Whose ways are just and right.
- 12 Lord *God* of Hosts, *that reign'st on high* ;
 That man is *truly* blest,
 Who *only* on thee doth rely,
 And in thee only rest.

PSALM LXXXV.

- 1 THY land to favour graciously
Thou hast not, Lord, been slack ;
Thou hast from *hard* captivity
Returned Jacob back.
- 2 The iniquity thou didst forgive
That wrought thy people woe ;
And all their sin, *that did thee grieve*,
Hast hid *where none shall know*.
- 3 Thine anger all thou hadst remov'd,
And *calmly* didst return
From thy fierce wrath which we had prov'd
Far worse than fire to burn.
- 4 God of our saving health and peace,
Turn us, and us restore ;
Thine indignation cause to cease
Towards us, *and chide no more*.
- 5 Wilt thou be angry without end,
For ever angry thus ?
Wilt thou thy frowning ire extend
From age to age on us ?
- 6 Wilt thou not turn and *hear our voice*,
And us again revive,
That so thy people may rejoice,
By thee preserv'd alive ?

7 Cause us to see thy goodness, Lord,
To us thy mercy shew ;
Thy saving health to us afford,
And life in us renew.

8 *And now*, what God the Lord will speak,
I will *go straight and* hear,
For to his people he speaks peace,
And to his saints *full dear*,

To his dear saints he will speak peace ;
But let them never more
Return to folly, *but surcease*
To trespass as before.

9 Surely, to such as do him fear
Salvation is at hand ;
And glory shall *ere long appear*
To dwell within our land.

10 Mercy and Truth, *that long were miss'd*,
Now *joyfully* are met ;
Sweet Peace and Righteousness have kiss'd,
And hand in hand are set.

11 Truth from the earth, *like to a flower*,
Shall bud and blossom *then* ;
And Justice, from her heavenly bower,
Look down *on mortal men.*

12 The Lord will also then bestow
Whatever thing is good ;
Our land shall forth in plenty throw
Her fruits *to be our food.*

- 13 Before him Righteousness shall go,
 His royal harbinger :
Then will he come, and not be slow,
 His footsteps cannot err.

PSALM LXXXVI.

- 1 THY *gracious* ear, O Lord, incline,
 O hear me, *I thee pray ;*
For I am poor, and almost pine
 With need, *and sad decay.*
- 2 Preserve my soul ; for I have trod
 Thy ways, and love the just ;
Save thou thy servant, O my God,
 Who still in thee doth trust.
- 3 Pity me, Lord, for daily thee
4 I call ; O make rejoice
 Thy servant's soul ; for, Lord, to thee
 I lift my soul *and voice.*
- 5 For thou art good, thou, Lord, art prone
 To pardon, thou to all
Art full of mercy, thou *alone*
 To them that on thee call.
- 6 Unto my supplication, Lord,
 Give ear, and to the cry
Of my *incessant* prayers afford
 Thy hearing graciously.

- 7 I, in the day of my distress,
Will call on thee *for aid* ;
For thou wilt grant me *free access*,
And answer *what I pray'd*.
- 8 Like thee among the Gods is none,
O Lord ; nor any works
Of all that other Gods have done
Like to thy *glorious* works.
- 9 The Nations all whom thou hast made
Shall come, *and all shall frame*
To bow them low before thee, Lord,
And glorify thy Name.
- 10 For great thou art, and wonders great
By thy strong hand are done :
Thou, *in thy everlasting seat*,
Remainest God alone.
- 11 Teach me, O Lord, thy way *most right* ;
I in thy truth will bide ;
To fear thy Name my heart unite,
So shall it never slide.
- 12 Thee will I praise, O Lord my God,
Thee honour and adore
With my whole heart, and blaze abroad
Thy Name for evermore.
- 13 For great thy mercy is toward me,
And thou hast freed my soul,
Even from the lowest hell set free,
From deepest darkness foul.

- 14 O God, the proud against me rise,
And violent men are met
To seek my life, and in their eyes
No fear of thee have set.
- 15 But thou, Lord, art the God most mild,
Readiest thy grace to shew,
Slow to be angry, and *art styl'd*
Most merciful, most true.
- 16 O, turn to me *thy face at length*,
And me have mercy on ;
Unto thy servant give thy strength,
And save thy handmaid's son.
- 17 Some sign of good to me afford,
And let my foes *then* see,
And be asham'd ; because thou, Lord,
Dost help and comfort me.
-

PSALM LXXXVII.

- 1 AMONG the holy mountains *high*
Is his foundation fast ;
There seated in his sanctuary,
His temple there is plac'd.
- 2 Sion's *fair* gates the Lord loves more
Than all the dwellings *fair*
Of Jacob's *land*, though there be store,
And all within his care.

- 3 City of God, most glorious things
Of thee *abroad* are spoke ;
4 I mention Egypt, *where proud kings*
Did our forefathers yoke.

I mention Babel to my friends,
Philistia *full of scorn* ;
And Tyre with Ethiop's *utmost ends*,
Lo this man there was born :

- 5 But *twice that praise shall in our ear*
Be said of Sion *last* ;
This and this man was born in her ;
High God shall fix her fast.

- 6 The Lord shall write it in a scroll
That ne'er shall be out-worn,
When he the nations doth inroll,
That this man there was born.

- 7 Both they who sing, and they who dance,
With sacred songs are there ;
In thee *fresh brooks and soft streams glance*,
And all my fountains clear.

PSALM LXXXVIII.

- 1 LORD God, that dost me save and keep,
All day to thee I cry ;
And all night long before thee *weep*,
Before thee *prostrate lie.*

2 Into thy presence let my prayer
 With sighs devout ascend;
And to my cries, that *ceaseless* are,
 Thine ear with favour bend.

3 For, cloy'd with woes and trouble store,
 Surcharg'd my soul doth lie;
My life, at *Death's uncheerful door*,
 Unto the grave draws nigh.

4 Reckon'd I am with them that pass
 Down to the *dismal pit*;
I am a man, but weak, alas!
 And for that name unfit.

5 From life discharg'd and parted quite
 Among the dead to *sleep*;
And like the slain in *bloody fight*,
 That in the grave lie *deep*.

Whom thou rememberest no more,
 Dost never more regard,
Them, from thy hand deliver'd o'er,
 Death's hideous house hath barr'd.

6 Thou in the lowest pit *profound*
 Hast set me *all forlorn*,
Where thickest darkness *hovers round*,
 In horrid deeps to mourn.

7 Thy wrath, *from which no shelter saves*,
 Full sore doth press on me;
Thou break'st upon me all thy waves,
 And all thy waves break me.

- 8 Thou dost my friends from me estrange,
And mak'st me odious,
Me to them odious, *for they change,*
And I here pent up thus.
- 9 Through sorrow, and affliction great,
Mine eye grows dim and dead ;
Lord, all the day I thee entreat,
My hands to thee I spread.
- 10 Wilt thou do wonders on the dead ?
Shall the deceas'd arise,
And praise thee *from their loathsome bed*
With pale and hollow eyes ?
- 11 Shall they thy loving-kindness tell,
On whom the grave *hath hold ?*
Or they, who in perdition *dwell,*
Thy faithfulness *unfold ?*
- 12 In darkness can thy mighty *hand*
Or wonderful acts be known ?
Thy justice in the *gloomy* land
Of *dark* oblivion ?
- 13 But I to thee, O Lord, do cry,
Ere yet my life be spent ;
And *up to thee* my prayer *doth hie,*
Each morn, and thee prevent.
- 14 Why wilt thou, Lord, my soul forsake,
And hide thy face from me,
15 That am already bruis'd, and shake
With terrour sent from thee ?

Bruis'd, and afflicted, and *so low*
 As ready to expire ;
 While I thy terrours undergo,
 Astonish'd with thine ire.

16 Thy fierce wrath over me doth flow ;
 Thy threatenings cut me through :

17 All day they round about me go,
 Like waves they me pursue.

18 Lover and friend thou hast remov'd,
 And sever'd from me far :

They *fly me now* whom I have lov'd,
 And as in darkness are.

A PARAPHRASE ON PSALM CXIV.

This and the following Psalm were done by the Author at fifteen years old.

WHEN the blest seed of Terah's faithful son,
 After long toil, their liberty had won ;
 And past from Pharian¹ fields to Canaan land,
 Led by the strength of the Almighty's hand ;
 Jehovah's wonders were in Israel shown,
 His praise and glory was in Israel known.
 That saw the troubled Sea, and shivering fled,
 And sought to hide his froth-becurled head
 Low in the earth ; Jordan's clear streams recoil,
 As a faint host that hath receiv'd the foil.
 The high huge-bellied mountains skip, like rams
 Amongst their ewes ; the little hills like lambs.

¹ 'Pharian : ' Egyptian.

Why fled the ocean ? And why skipt the mountains ?
Why turned Jordan toward his crystal fountains ?
Shake, Earth ; and at the presence be aghast
Of Him that ever was, and aye shall last ;
That glassy floods from rugged rocks can crush,
And make soft rills from fiery flint-stones gush !

PSALM CXXXVI.

LET us, with a gladsome mind,
Praise the Lord, for he is kind ;
For his mercies aye endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.

Let us blaze his name abroad,
For of Gods he is the God ;
For his, &c.

O, let us his praises tell,
Who doth the wrathful tyrants quell ;
For his, &c.

Who, with his miracles, doth make
Amazed Heaven and Earth to shake ;
For his, &c.

Who, by his wisdom, did create
The painted heavens so full of state ;
For his, &c.

Who did the solid earth ordain
To rise above the watery plain ;
For his, &c.

Who, by his all-commanding might,
Did fill the new-made world with light ;
For his, &c.

And caus'd the golden-tressed sun
All the day long his course to run ;

For his, &c.

The horned moon to shine by night,
Amongst her spangled sisters bright ;

For his, &c.

He, with his thunder-clasping hand,
Smote the first-born of Egypt land ;

For his, &c.

And, in despite of Pharoah fell,
He brought from thence his Israel ;

For his, &c.

The ruddy waves he cleft in twain
Of the Erythræan main ;

For his, &c.

The floods stood still, like walls of glass,
While the Hebrew bands did pass ;

For his, &c.

But full soon they did devour
The tawny king with all his power ;

For his, &c.

His chosen people he did bless
In the wasteful wilderness ;

For his, &c.

In bloody battle he brought down
Kings of prowess and renown ;

For his, &c.

He foil'd bold Seon¹ and his host,
That rul'd the Amorræan coast ;

For his, &c.

And large-limb'd Og he did subdue,
With all his over-hardy crew ;

For his, &c.

¹ 'Seon : ' Sihon, king of Amorites.

And, to his servant Israël,
He gave their land therein to dwell ;

For his, &c.

He hath, with a piteous eye,
Beheld us in our misery ;

For his, &c.

And freed us from the slavery
Of the invading enemy ;

For his, &c.

All living creatures he doth feed,
And with full hand supplies their need ;

For his, &c.

Let us therefore warble forth
His mighty majesty and worth ;

For his, &c.

That his mansion hath on high,
Above the reach of mortal eye ;

For his mercies aye endure,

Ever faithful, ever sure.

JOANNIS MILTONI

LONDINENSIS

POEMATA.

QUORUM PLERAQUE INTRA ANNUM ÆTATIS VIGESIMUM CONSCRIPSIT.

HÆC quæ sequuntur de Authore testimonia, tametsi ipse intelligebat non tam de se quam supra se esse dicta, eò quòd præclaro ingenio viri, nec non amici, ita ferè solent laudare, ut omnia suis potiùs virtutibus, quàm veritati congruentia, nimis cupidè affingant, noluit tamen horum egregiam in se voluntatem non esse notam; cùm alli præsertim ut id faceret magnoperè suaderent. Dum enim nimis laudis invidiam totis ab se viribus amolitur, sibi quod plus æquo est non attributum esse mavult, judicium interim hominum cordatorum atque illustrium quin summo sibi honori ducat, negare non potest.

JOANNES BAPTISTA MANSUS, *Marchio Villensis Neapolitanus*, ad JOANNEM MILTONIUM *Anglum*.

UT mens, forma, decor, facies, mos, si pietas sic,
Non Anglus, verùm herclè Angelus,¹ ipse fores.

*Ad JOANNEM MILTONEM Anglum, triplici poeseos laureâ coronandum,
Græcâ nimirum, Latinâ, atque Hetruscâ, Epigramma JOANNIS
SALSILLI Romani.*

CEDE, Meles; cedat depressâ Mincius urnâ;
Sebetus Tassum desinat usque loqui;
At Thamesis victor cunctis ferat altior undas,
Nam per te, Milto, par tribus unus erit.

Ad JOANNEM MILTONUM.

GRÆCIA Mæonidem, jactet sibi Roma Maronem,
Anglia Miltonum jactat utrique parem.

SELVAGGI.

¹ 'Anglus, verùm herclè Angelus:' alluding to the well-known story of Gregory seeing two beautiful English youths in Rome, and using the above words.

AL SIGNOR GIO. MILTONI, NOBILE INGLESE.

ODE.

ERGIMI all' Etra ò Clio
Perche di stelle intreccierò corona
Non più del Biondo Dio
La fronde eterna in Pindo, e in Eliconà ;
Diensi a merto maggior, maggiori i fregi,
A celeste virtù celesti pregi.

Non può del tempo edace
Rimaner preda, eterno alto valore ;
Non può l' oblio rapace,
Furar dalle memorie eccelso onore,
Su l' arco di mia cetra un dardo forte
Virtù m' adatti, e ferirò la morte.

Dell' ocean profondo
Cinta dagli ampi gorgi Anglia risiede
Separata dal mondo,
Però che il suo valor l' umano eccede :
Questa feconda sà produrre Eroi
Ch' hanno a ragion del sovrumano tra noi.

Alla virtù sbandita
Danno nei petti lor fido ricetta,
Quella gli è sol gradita,
Perchè in lei san trovar gioia e diletto ;
Ridillo tu, Giovanni, e mostra in tanto
Con tua vera virtù, vero il mio Canto.

Lungi dal patrio lido
Spinse Zeusi l' industrie ardente brama ;
Ch' udio d' Elena il grido
Con aurea tromba rimbombar la fama,
E per poterla effigiare al paro
Dalle più belle Idee trasse il più raro.

Così l' ape ingegnosa
Trae con industria il suo liquor pregiato
Dal giglio e dalla rosa,
E quanti vaghi fiori ornano il prato ;
Formano un dolce suon diverse corde,
Fan varie voci melodia concorde.

Di bella gloria amante
Milton dal ciel natio per varie parti
Le peregrine piante
Volgesti a ricercar scienze, ed arti ;
Del Gallo regnator vedesti i regni,
E dell' Italia ancor gli Eroi più degni.

Fabro quasi divino
Sol virtù rintracciando il tuo pensiero
Vide in ogni confino
Chi di nobil valor calca il sentiero ;
L'ottimo dal miglior dopo scegliea
Per fabbricar d'ogni virtù l' idea.

Quanti nacquero in Flora
O in lei del parlar Tosco appreser l' arte,
La cui memoria onora
Il mondo fatta eterna in dotte carte,
Volesti ricercar per tuo tesoro,
E parlasti con lor nell' opre loro.

Nell' altera Babelle
Per te il parlar confuse Giove in vano,
Chè per varie favelle
Di se stessa trofeo cadde su'l piano :
Ch' ode oltr' all' Anglia il suo più degno idioma
Spagna, Francia, Toscana, e Grecia, e Roma.

I più profondi arcani
Ch' occulta la natura e in cielo e in terra,
Ch' a ingegni sovrumani
Tropo avara, talor gli chiude e serra,
Chiaramente conosci, e giungi al fine
Della moral virtude al gran confine.

Non batta il Tempo l' ale,
Fermisi immoto, e in un ferminsigli anni,
Che di virtù immortale
Scorron di troppo ingiuriosi ai danni ;
Chè s' opre degne di poema e storia
Furon già, l'hai presenti alla memoria.

Dammi tua dolce cetra
Se vuoi ch' io dica del tuo dolce canto,
Ch' inalzandoti all' Etra
Di farti uomo celeste ottiene il vanto,
Il Tamigi il dirà che gli è concesso
Per te suo cigno pareggiar permesso.

Io che in riva del Arno
Tento spiegar tuo merto alto e preclaro,
So che fatico indarno,
E ad ammirar, non a lodarlo imparo ;
Freno dunque la lingua, e ascolto il core
Che ti prende a lodar con lo stupore.

Del sig. ANTONIO FRANCINI, gentiluomo Fiorentino.

JOANNI MILTONI, *Londinensi*:

Juveni patriâ, virtutibus eximio;

VIRO, qui multa peregrinatione, studio cuncta orbis terrarum loca, perspexit;
ut novus Ulysses omnia ubique ab omnibus apprehenderet:

Polyglotto, in cujus ore linguæ jam deperditæ sic reviviscunt, ut idiomata omnia sint in ejus laudibus infacunda; et jure ea percallet, ut admirationes et plausus populorum ab propriâ sapientiâ excitatos intelligat:

Illi, cujus animi dotes corporisque sensus ad admirationem commovent, et per ipsam motum cuique auferunt; cujus opera ad plausus hortantur, sed venustate vocem laudatoribus adimunt:

Cui in memoriâ totus orbis; in intellectu sapientia; in voluntate ardor gloriæ; in ore eloquentia; harmonicos coelestium sphærarum sonitus astronomiâ duce, audienti; characteres mirabilium naturæ per quos Dei magnitudo describitur, magistrâ philosophiâ, legenti; antiquitatum latebras, vetustatis excidia, eruditionis ambages, comite assiduâ autorum lectione,

Exquirenti, restauranti, percurrenti.
At cur nitor in arduum?

Illi, in cujus virtutibus evulgandis ora Famæ non sufficiant, nec hominum stupor in laudandis satis est, reverentiæ et amoris ergo hoc ejus meritis debitum admirationis tributum offert CAROLUS DATUS¹ *Patricius Florentinus*,

Tanto homini servus, tantæ virtutis amator.

¹ 'Carolus Datus:' Carlo Dati, one of Milton's Florentine friends.

ELEGIARUM LIBER.

ELEG. I.

AD CAROLUM DEODATUM.¹

TANDEM, chare, tuæ mihi pervenere tabellæ,
Pertulit et voces nuncia charta tuas ;
Pertulit, occiduâ Devæ Cestrensis ab orâ
Vergivium prono quâ petit amne salum.
Multùm, crede, juvat terras aluisse remotas
Pectus amans nostrî, tàmque fidele caput,
Quódque mihi lepidum tellus longinqua sodalem
Debet, at unde brevi reddere jussa velit.
Me tenet urbs reflua quam Thamesis alluit undâ,
Méque nec invitum patria dulcis habet.
Jam nec arundiferum mihi cura revisere Camum,
Nec dudum vetiti me laris angit amor.
Nuda nec arva placent, umbrásque negantia molles :
Quàm malè Phœbicolis convenit ille locus !
Nec duri libet usque minas perferre Magistri,
Cæteráque ingenio non subeunda meo.

¹ ' Carolum Deodatum : ' Charles Deodati, one of Milton's most intimate friends, was an excellent scholar, and practised physic in Cheshire. He was educated with our author at St Paul's School in London ; and from thence went to Trinity College, Oxford, where he was entered in the year 1621, at thirteen years of age. He was a fellow-collegian there with Alexander Gill, another of Milton's intimate friends, who became successively usher and master of St Paul's School. He died in 1638.

Si sit hoc exilium patrios adiise penates,
Et vacuum curis otia grata sequi,
Non ego vel profugi nomen sortémve recuso,
Lætus et exilii conditione fruor.
O, utinam vates nunquam graviora tulisset
Ille Tomitano flebilis exul agro ;
Non tunc Ionio quicquam cessisset Homero,
Neve foret victo laus tibi prima, Maro.
Tempora nam licet hîc placidis dare libera Musis,
Et totum rapiunt me, mea vita, libri.
Excipit hinc fessum sinuosi pompa theatri,
Et vocat ad plausus garrula scena suos.
Seu catus auditur senior, seu prodigus hæres,
Seu procus, aut positâ casside miles adest,
Sive decennali fœcundus lite patronus
Detonat inculto barbara verba foro ;
Sæpe vafer gnato succurrit servus amanti,
Et nasum rigidi fallit ubique patris ;
Sæpe novos illic virgo mirata calores
Quid sit amor nescit, dum quoque nescit, amat.
Sive cruentatum furiosa Tragœdia sceptrum
Quassat, et effusis crinibus ora rotat,
Et dolet, et specto, juvat et spectâsse dolendo,
Interdum et lacrymis dulcis amaror inest :
Seu puer infelix indelibata reliquit
Gaudia, et abrupto flendus amore cadit :
Seu ferus è tenebris iterat Styga criminis ultor,
Conscia funereo pectora torre movens :
Seu mœret Pelopeia domus, seu nobilis Ili,
Aut luit incestos aula Creontis avos.
Sed neque sub tecto semper, nec in urbe, latemus ;
Irrita nec nobis tempora veris eunt.
Nos quoque lucus habet vicinâ consitus ulmo,
Atque suburbani nobilis umbra loci.

Sæpius hîc, blandas spirantia sidera flammæ,
Virgineos videas præteriisse choros.
Ah quoties dignæ stupui miracula formæ,
Quæ possit senium vel reparare Jovis!
Ah quoties vidi superantia lumina gemmas,
Atque faces, quotquot volvit uterque polus!
Collaque bis vivi Pelopis quæ brachia vincant,
Quæque fluit puro nectare tincta via!
Et decus eximium frontis, tremulósque capillos,
Aurea quæ fallax retia tendit Amor!
Pellacésque genas, ad quas hyacinthina sordet
Purpura, et ipse tui floris, Adoni, rubor!
Cedite, laudatæ toties Heroides olim,
Et quæcunque vagum cepit amica Jovem.
Cedite, Achæmenia turritâ fronte puellæ,
Et quot Susa colunt, Memnoniámque Ninon;
Vos etiam Danaæ fasces submitтите Nymphæ,
Et vos Iliacæ, Romuleæque nurus:
Nec Pompeianas Tarpëia Musa columnas
Jactet, et Ausoniis plena theatra stolis.
Gloria Virginibus debetur prima Britannis;
Extera, sat tibi sit, fœmina, posse sequi.
Túque urbs Dardaniis, Londinum, structa colonis,
Turrigerum latè conspicienda caput,
Tu nimium felix intra tua mœnia claudis
Quicquid formosi pendulus orbis habet.
Non tibi tot cœlo scintillant astra sereno,
Endymioneæ turba ministra deæ
Quot tibi, conspicuæ formæque auróque puellæ
Per medias radiant turba videnda vias.
Creditur huc geminis venisse invecta columbis
Alma pharetrigero milite cincta Venus;
Huic Cnidon, et riguas Simoentes flumine valles,
Huic Paphon, et roseam posthabitura Cypron.

Ast ego, dum pueri sinit indulgentia cæci,
 Mœnia quàm subito linq̄ere fausta paro ;
 Et vitare procul malefidæ infamia Circes
 Atria, divini Molyos usus ope.
 Stat quoque juncosas Cami remeare paludes,
 Atque iterum raucae murmur adire Scholæ.
 Interea fidi parvum cape munus amici,
 Paucâque in alternos verba coacta modos.

ELEG. II. ANNO ÆTATIS XVII.

IN OBITUM
 PRÆCONIS ACADEMICI CANTABRIGIENSIS.¹

TE, qui, conspicuus baculo fulgente, solebas
 Palladium toties ore ciere gregem ;
 Ultima præconum, præconem te quoque sæva
 Mors rapit, officio nec favet ipsa suo.
 Candidiora licet fuerint tibi tempora plumis,
 Sub quibus accipimus delituisse Jovem ;
 O dignus tamen Hæmonio juvenescere succo,
 Dignus in Æsonios vivere posse dies ;
 Dignus, quem Stygiis medicâ revocaret ab undis
 Arte Coronides, sæpe rogante deâ.
 Tu si jussus eras acies accire togatas,
 Et celer à Phœbo nuntius ire tuo ;
 Talis in Iliacâ stabat Cyllenius aulâ
 Alipes, æthereâ missus ab arce Patris :
 Talis et Eurybates ante ora furentis Achillei
 Rettulit Atridæ jussa severa ducis.

¹ The person here commemorated is Richard Ridding, one of the University beadles, and a Master of Arts of St John's College, Cambridge.

Magna sepulchrorum regina, satelles Averni,
 Sæva nimis Musis, Palladi sæva nimis,
 Quin illos rapias qui pondus inutile terræ ;
 Turba quidem est telis ista petenda tuis.
 Vestibus hunc igitur pullis, Academia, luge,
 Et madeant lachrymis nigra feretra tuis.
 Fundat et ipsa modos querebunda Elegiæ tristes,
 Personet et totis nœnia mœsta Scholis.

ELEG. III. ANNO ÆTATIS XVII.

IN OBITUM PRÆSULIS WINTONIENSIS.¹

MÆSTUS eram, et tacitus, nullo comitante, sedebam ;
 Hærebântque animo tristia plura meo :
 Protinus en ! subiit funestæ cladis imago,
 Fecit in Angliaco quam Libitina solo ;
 Dum procerum ingressa est splendentes marmore turres,
 Dira sepulchrali Mors metuenda face ;
 Pulsavitque auro gravidos et jaspide muros,
 Nec metuit satrapum sternere falce greges.
 Tunc memini clarique ducis, fratrisque verendi,
 Intempestivis ossa cremata rogis :
 Et memini Heroum, quos vidit ad æthera raptos,
 Flevit et amissos Belgia tota duces.
 At te præcipuè luxi, dignissime Præsul,
 Wintoniæque olim gloria magna tuæ ;
 Delicui fletu, et tristi sic ore querebar :
 “ Mors fera, Tartareo diva secunda Jovi,

¹ Lancelot Andrews, Bishop of Winchester, had been originally Master of Pembroke Hall in Cambridge, but long before Milton's time. He died at Winchester House in Southwark, September 21, 1626.

Nonne satis quòd sylva tuas persentiat iras,
Et quòd in herbosos jus tibi detur agros ?
Quòdque afflata tuo marcescant lilia tabo,
Et crocus, et pulchræ Cypridi sacra rosa ?
Nec sinis, ut semper fluvio contermina quercus
Miretur lapsus prætereuntis aquæ ?
Et tibi succumbit, liquido quæ plurima cœlo
Evehitur pennis, quamlibet augur, avis ;
Et quæ mille nigris errant animalia sylvis ;
Et quot alunt mutum Proteos antra pecus.
Invida, tanta tibi cùm sit concessa potestas,
Quid juvat humanâ tingere cæde manus ?
Nobiléque in pectus certas acuisse sagittas,
Semideámque animam sede fugâsse suâ ?”
Talia dum lacrymans alto sub pectore volvo,
Roscidus occiduis Hesperus exit aquis,
Et Tartessiacò submerserat æquore currum
Phœbus, ab Eoo littore mensus iter :
Nec mora, membra cavo posui refovenda cubili,
Condiderant oculos nóxque sopórque meos :
Cùm mihi visus eram lato spatiarier agro ;
Heu ! nequit ingenium visa referre meum.
Illic puniceâ radiabant omnia luce,
Ut matutino cùm juga sole rubent.
Ac veluti cùm pandit opes Thaumantia proles,
Vestitu nituit multicolore solum.
Non dea tam variis ornavit floribus hortos
Alcinoi, Zephyro Chloris amata levi.
Flumina vernantes lambunt argentea campos,
Ditior Hesperio flavet arena Tago.
Serpit odoriferas per opes levis aura Favonî,
Aura sub innumeris humida nata rosis.
Talis in extremis terræ Gangetidis oris
Luciferi regis fingitur esse domus.

Ipse racemiferis dum densas vitibus umbras
 Et pelluentes miror ubique locos,
 Ecce ! mihi subitò Præsul Wintonius astat,
 Sidereum nitido fulsit in ore jubar ;
 Vestis ad auratos defluxit candida talos,
 Infula divinum cinxerat alba caput.
 Dúmque senex tali incedit venerandus amictu,
 Intremuit læto florea terra sono.
 Agmina gemmatis plaudunt cœlestia pennis,
 Pura triumphali personat æthra tubâ.
 Quisque novum amplexu comitem cantúque salutat,
 Hósque aliquis placido misit ab ore sonos ;
 “Nate, veni, et patrii felix cape gaudia regni,
 Semper abhinc duro, nate, labore vaca.”
 Dixit, et aligeræ tetigerunt nablia turmæ,
 At mihi cum tenebris aurea pulsa quies.
 Flebam turbatos Cephaleiâ pellice somnos ;
 Talia contingant somnia sæpe mihi !

ELEG. IV. ANNO ÆTATIS XVIII.

AD THOMAM JUNIUM, PRÆCEPTOREM SUUM,

APUD MERCATORES ANGLICOS HAMBURGÆ AGENTES, PASTORIS MUNERE
FUNGENTEM.¹

CURRE per immensum subitò, mea litera, pontum,
 I, pete Teutonicos læve per æquor agros ;
 Segnes rumpe moras, et nil, precor, obstet eunti,
 Et festinantis nil remoretur iter.
 Ipse ego Sicanio frænantem carcere ventos
 Æolon, et virides sollicitabo deos,

¹ Thomas Young, pastor of the church of English merchants at Hamburg, was Milton's private preceptor, before he was sent to St Paul's school.

Cæruleámque suis comitatam Dorida Nymphis ;
Ut tibi dent placidam per sua regna viam.
At tu, si poteris, celeres tibi sume jugales,
Vecta quibus Colchis fugit ab ore viri ;
Aut queis Triptolemus Scythicas devenit in oras
Gratus Eleusinâ missus ab urbe puer.
Atque ubi Germanas flavere videbis arenas,
Ditis ad Hamburgæ mœnia flecte gradum,
Dicitur occiso quæ ducere nomen ab Hamâ,
Cimbrica quem fertur clava dedisse neci.
Vivit ibi antiquæ clarus pietatis honore
Præsul, Christicolas pascere doctus oves :
Ille quidem est animæ plusquam pars altera nostræ ;
Dimidio vitæ vivere cogor ego.
Hei mihi ! quot pelagi, quot montes interjecti,
Me faciunt aliâ parte carere mei !
Charior ille mihi, quàm tu, doctissime Graiûm,
Cliniadi, pronepos qui Telamonis erat ;
Quámque Stagyrtes generoso magnus alumno,
Quem peperit Libyco Chaonis alma Jovi.
Qualis Amyntorides, qualis Philyrëius heros
Myrmidonum regi, talis et ille mihi.
Primus ego Aonios, illo præunte, recessus
Lustrabam, et bifidi sacra vireta jugi ;
Pieriósque hausi latices, Clióque favente,
Castalio sparsi læta ter ora mero.
Flammeus at signum ter viderat arietis Æthon,
Induxitque auro lanæ terga novo ;
Bisque novo terram sparsisti, Chlори, senilem
Gramine, bisque tuas abstulit Auster opes :
Necdum ejus licuit mihi lumina pascere vultu,
Aut linguæ dulces aure bibisse sonos.
Vade igitur, cursúque Eurum præverte sonorum ;
Quàm sit opus monitis res docet, ipsa vides.

Invenies dulci cum conjuge fortè sedentem,
Mulcentem gremio pignora chara suo :
Forsitan aut veterum prælarga volumina patrum
Versantem, aut veri Biblia sacra Dei ;
Cœlestive animas saturantem rore tenellas,
Grande salutiferæ religionis opus.
Utque solet, multam sit dicere cura salutem,
Dicere quam decuit, si modò adesset, herum.
Hæc quoque, paulùm oculos in humum defixa modestos,
Verba verecundo sis memor ore loqui :
Hæc tibi, si teneris vacat inter prælia Musis,
Mittit ab Angliaco littore fida manus.
Accipe sinceram, quamvis sit sera, salutem ;
Fiat et hoc ipso gratior illa tibi.
Sera quidem, sed vera fuit, quam casta recepit
Icaris à lento Penelopeia viro.
Ast ego quid volui manifestum tollere crimen,
Ipse quod ex omni parte levare nequit ?
Arguitur tardus meritò, noxámque fatetur,
Et pudet officium deseruisse suum.
Tu modò da veniam fasso, veniámque roganti ;
Crimina diminui, quæ patuere, solent.
Non ferus in pavidos rictus diducit hiantes,
Vulnifico pronos nec rapit ungue leo.
Sæpe sarissiferi crudelia pectora Thracis
Supplicis ad mœstas delicuere preces :
Extensæque manus avertunt fulminis ictus,
Placat et iratos hostia parva Deos.
Jámque diu scripsisse tibi fuit impetus illi,
Neve moras ultra ducere passus Amor ;
Nam vaga Fama refert, heu nuntia vera malorum !
In tibi finitimis bella tumere locis ;
Teque tuámque urbem truculento milite cingi,
Et jam Saxonicos arma parâsse duces.

Te circum latè campos populatur Enyo,
Et sata carne virûm jam cruor arva rigat;
Germanisque suum concessit Thracia Martem,
Illuc Odrysios Mars pater egit equos;
Perpetuóque comans jam deflorescit oliva,
Fugit et ærisonam Diva perosa tubam,
Fugit Io! terris, et jam non ultima virgo
Creditur ad superas justa volâsse domos.
Te tamen interea belli circumsonat horror,
Vivis et ignoto solus inópsque solo;
Et, tibi quam patrii non exhibuere penates,
Sede peregrinâ quæris egenus opem.
Patria, dura parens, et saxis sævior albis
Spumea quæ pulsat littoris unda tui,
Siccine te decet innocuos exponere foetus,
Siccine in externam ferrea cogis humum?
Et sinis, ut terris quærant alimenta remotis
Quos tibi prospiciens miserat ipse Deus,
Et qui læta ferunt de cœlo nuntia, quique,
Quæ via post cineres ducat ad astra, docent?
Digna quidem Stygiis quæ vivas clausa tenebris,
Æternâque animæ digna perire fame!
Haud aliter vates terræ Thesbitidis olim
Pressit inassueto devia tesqua pede,
Desertásque Arabum salebras, dum regis Achabi
Effugit, atque tuas, Sidoni dira, manus:
Talis et horrissono laceratus membra flagello,
Paulus ab Æmathiâ pellitur urbe Cilix,
Piscosæque ipsum Gergessæ civis Iësum
Finibus ingratus jussit abire suis.
At tu sume animos; nec spes cadat anxia curis,
Nec tua concutiat decolor ossa metus.
Sis etenim quamvis fulgentibus obsitus armis,
Intenténtque tibi millia tela necem,

At nullis vel inerme latus violabitur armis,
Dêque tuo cuspis nulla cruore bibet.
Namque eris ipse Dei radiante sub ægide tutus ;
Ille tibi custos, et pugil ille tibi :
Ille, Sionææ qui tot sub mœnibus arcis
Assyrios fudit nocte silente viros,
Inque fugam vertit quos in Samaritadas oras
Misit ab antiquis prisca Damascus agris ;
Terruit et densas pavido cum rege cohortes,
Aere dum vacuo buccina clara sonat,
Cornea pulvereum dum verberat ungula campum,
Currus arenosam dum quatit actus humum,
Auditúrque hinnitus equorum ad bella ruentûm,
Et strepitus ferri, murmuráque alta virûm.
Et tu (quod superest miseris) sperare memento,
Et tua magnanimo pectore vince mala ;
Nec dubites quandoque frui melioribus annis,
Atque iterum patrios posse videre lares.

ELEG. V. ANNO ÆTATIS XX.

IN ADVENTUM VERIS.

In se perpetuo Tempus revolubile gyro
Jam revocat Zephyros vere tepente novos ;
Induitúrque brevem Tellus reparata juventam,
Jámque soluta gelu dulce virescit humus.
Fallor ? an et nobis redeunt in carmina vires,
Ingeniúmque mihi munere veris adest ?
Munere veris adest, iterúmque vigescit ab illo,
(Quis putet ?) atque aliquod jam sibi poscit opus.

Castalis ante oculos, bifidúmque cacumen oberrat,
Et mihi Pyrenen somnia nocte ferunt ;
Concitáque arcano fervent mihi pectora motu,
Et furor, et sonitus me sacer intus agit.
Delius ipse venit, video Penëide lauro
Implicitos crines ; Delius ipse venit.
Jam mihi mens liquidi raptatur in ardua cœli,
Pérque vagas nubes corpore liber eo ;
Pérque umbras, pérque antra feror, penetralia vatum,
Et mihi fana patent interiora deûm ;
Intuitúrque animus toto quid agatur Olympo,
Nec fugiunt oculos Tartara cæca meos.
Quid tam grande sonat distento spiritus ore ?
Quid parit hæc rabies, quid sacer iste furor ?
Ver mihi, quod dedit ingenium, cantabitur illo ;
Profuerint isto reddita dona modo.
Jam, Philomela, tuos, foliis adoperta novellis,
Instituis modulos, dum silet omne nemus :
Urbe ego, tu sylvâ, simul incipiamus utrique,
Et simul adventum veris uterque canat.
Veris Io ! rediere vices ; celebremus honores
Veris, et hoc subeat Musa perennis opus.
Jam sol, Æthiopas fugiens Tithoniáque arva,
Flectit ad Arctöas aurea lora plagas.
Est breve noctis iter, brevis est mora noctis opacæ,
Horrida cum tenebris exulat illa suis.
Jámque Lycaonius, plastrum cœleste, Boötes
Non longâ sequitur fessus ut ante viâ ;
Nunc etiam solitas circum Jovis atria toto
Excubias agitant sidera rara polo :
Nam dolus, et cædes, et vis cum nocte recessit,
Neve Giganteum Dii timuere scelus.
Fortè aliquis scopuli recubans in vertice pastor,
Roscida cùm primo sole rubescit humus,

Hac, ait, hac certè caruisti nocte puellâ,
Phœbe, tuâ, celeres quæ retineret equos.
Læta suas repetit silvas, pharetrâmq; resumit
Cynthia, luciferas ut videt alta rotas ;
Et, tenues ponens radios, gaudere videtur
Officium fieri tam breve fratris ope.
“Desere,” Phœbus ait, “thalamos, Aurora, seniles ;
Quid juvat effœto procubuisse toro ?
Te manet Æolides viridi venator in herbâ ;
Surge, tuos ignes altus Hymettus habet.”
Flava verecundo dea crimen in ore fatetur,
Et matutinos ociùs urget equos.
Exuit invisam Tellus rediviva senectam,
Et cupit amplexus, Phœbe, subire tuos ;
Et cupit, et digna est : Quid enim formosius illâ,
Pandit ut omniferos luxuriosa sinus,
Atque Arabum spirat messes, et ab ore venusto
Mitia cum Paphiis fundit amoma rosis !
Ecce ! coronatur sacro frons ardua luco,
Cingit ut Idæam pinea turris Opim ;
Et vario madidos intexit flore capillos,
Floribus et visa est posse placere suis.
Floribus effusos ut erat redimita capillos,
Tænario placuit diva Sicana deo.
Aspice, Phœbe, tibi faciles hortantur amores,
Mellitâsque movent flamina verna preces :
Cinnamêâ Zephyrus leve plaudit odorifer alâ,
Blanditiâsque tibi ferre videntur aves.
Nec sine dote tuos temeraria quærit amores
Terra, nec optatos poscit egena toros ;
Alma salutiferum medicos tibi gramen in usus
Præbet, et hinc titulos adjuvat ipsa tuos :
Quòd, si te pretium, si te fulventia tangunt
Munera, (muneribus sæpe coemptus amor)

Illa tibi ostentat quascunque sub æquore vasto,
Et superinjectis montibus, abdit opes.
Ah quoties, cùm tu clivoso fessus Olympo
In vespertinas præcipitaris aquas,
“Cur te,” inquit, “cursu languentem, Phœbe, diurno
Hesperiiis recipit cæcula Mater aquis?
Quid tibi cum Tethy? Quid cum Tartesside lymphâ?
Dia quid immundo perluis ora salo?
Frigora, Phœbe, meâ meliùs captabis in umbrâ;
Huc ades, ardentes imbue rore comas.
Mollior egelidâ veniet tibi somnus in herbâ;
Huc ades, et gremio lumina pone meo.
Quâque jaces, circum mulcebit lenè susurrans
Aura per humentes corpora fusa rosas.
Nec me (crede mihi) terrent Semelëia fata,
Nec Phaetonteo fumidus axis equo:
Cùm tu, Phœbe, tuo sapientiùs uteris igni;
Huc ades, et gremio lumina pone meo.”
Sic Tellus lasciva suos suspirat amores;
Matris in exemplum cætera turba ruunt:
Nunc etenim toto currit vagus orbe Cupido,
Languentésque fovet solis ab igne faces:
Insonuere novis lethalia cornua nervis,
Triste micant ferro tela corusca novo:
Jámque vel invictam tentat superâsse Dianam,
Quæque sedet sacro Vesta pudica foco.
Ipsa senescentem reparat Venus annua formam,
Atque iterum tepido creditur orta mari.
Marmoreas juvenes clamant Hymenæe! per urbes,
Littus, Io Hymen! et cava saxa sonant.
Cultior ille venit, tunicâque decentior aptâ,
Puniceum redolet vestis odora crocum.
Egreditúrque frequens, ad amœni gaudia veris,
Virgineos auro cincta puella sinus:

Votum est cuique suum, votum est tamen omnibus unum,
Ut sibi, quem cupiat, det Cytherea virum.
Nunc quoque septenâ modulatur arundine pastor,
Et sua, quæ jungat, carmina Phyllis habet.
Navita nocturno placat sua sidera cantu,
Delphinâsque leves ad vada summa vocat.
Jupiter ipse alto cum conjuge ludit Olympo,
Convocat et famulos ad sua festa deos.
Nunc etiam Satyri, cùm sera crepuscula surgunt,
Pervolitant celeri florea rura choro ;
Sylvanûsque suâ cyparissi fronde revinctus,
Semicapérque deus, semideûsque caper.
Quæque sub arboribus Dryades latuere vetustis,
Per juga, per solos expatiantur agros.
Per sata luxuriat fruticetâque Mænalius Pan,
Vix Cybele mater, vix sibi tuta Ceres ;
Atque aliquam cupidus prædatur Oreada Faunus.
Consulit in trepidos dum sibi Nympha pedes ;
Jámque latet, latitânsque cupit malè tecta videri,
Et fugit, et fugiens pervelit ipsa capi.
Dii quoque non dubitant cœlo præponere sylvas,
Et sua quisque sibi numina lucus habet :
Et sua quisque diu sibi numina lucus habeto,
Nec vos arboreâ, dii, precor, ite domo.
Te referant miseris te, Jupiter, aurea terris
Sæcla ; quid ad nimbos aspera tela redis ?
Tu saltem lentè rapidos age, Phœbe, jugales
Quà potes, et sensim tempora veris eant,
Brumâque productas tardè ferat hispida noctes,
Ingruat et nostro serior umbra polo.

ELEG. VI.

AD CAROLUM DEODATUM,

RURI COMMORANTEM,

Qui cum Idibus Decemb. scripsisset, et sua carmina excusari postulâset si solito minùs essent bona, quòd inter lautitias, quibus erat ab amicis exceptus, haud satis felicem operam Musis dare se posse affirmabat, hoc habuit responsum.

MITTO tibi sanam non pleno ventre salutem,
Quâ tu, distento, fortè carere potes.
At tua quid nostram prolectat Musa camœnam,
Nec sinit optatas posse sequi tenebras?
Carminè scire velis quàm te redamémque colámque;
Crede mihi, vix hoc carminè scire queas.
Nam neque noster amor modulis includitur arctis,
Nec venit ad claudos integer ipse pedes.
Quàm benè solennes epulas, hilarémque Decembrem,
Festáque cœlifugam quæ coluere deum,
Deliciásque refers, hiberni gaudia ruris,
Haustáque per lepidos Gallica musta focos!
Quid quereris refugam vino dapibúsque poesin?
Carmen amat Bacchum, carmina Bacchus amat.
Nec puduit Phœbum virides gestâsse corymbos,
Atque hederam lauro præposuisse suæ.
Sæpiùs Aoniis clamavit collibus, Eucæ!
Mista Thyonëo turba novena choro.
Naso Corallæis mala carmina misit ab agris:
Non illic epulæ, non sata vitis erat.
Quid nisi vina, rosásque, racemiferúmque Lyæum,
Cantavit brevibus Tëia Musa modis?
Pindaricósque inflat numeros Teumesius Euan,
Et redolet sumptum pagina quæque merum;

Dum gravis everso currus crepat axe supinus,
Et volat Elëo pulvere fuscus eques
Quadrímóque madens Lyricen Romanus Iaccho,
Dulcè canit Glyceran, flavicomámque Chloen.
Jam quoque lauta tibi generoso mensa paratu
Mentis alit vires, ingeniúmque fovet.
Massica fœcundam despumant pocula venam,
Fundis et ex ipso condita metra cado.
Addimus his artes, fusúmque per intima Phœbum
Corda ; favent uni Bacchus, Apollo, Ceres.
Scilicet haud mirum, tam dulcia carmina per te,
Numine composito, tres peperisse deos.
Nunc quoque Thressa tibi cælato barbitos auro
Insonat, arguta mollitèr icta manu ;
Auditúrque chelys suspensa tapetia circum,
Virgineos tremulâ quæ regat arte pedes.
Illa tuas saltem teneant spectacula Musas,
Et revocent, quantum crapula pellit iners.
Crede mihi, dum psallit ebur, comitatáque plectrum
Implet odoratos festa chorea tholos,
Percipies tacitum per pectora serpere Phœbum,
Quale repentinus permeat ossa calor ;
Pérque puellares oculos, digitúmque sonantem,
Irruet in totos lapsa Thalia sinus.
Namque Elegia levis multorum cura deorum est,
Et vocat ad numeros quemlibet illa suos ;
Liber adest elegis, Eratóque, Cerésque, Venúsque,
Et cum purpureâ Matre tenellus Amor.
Talibus indè licent convivia larga poetis,
Sæpiùs et veteri commaduisse mero.
At qui bella refert, et adulto sub Jove cœlum,
Heroásque pios, semideósque duces,
Et nunc sancta canit superúm consulta deorum,
Nunc latrata fero regna profunda cane,

Ille quidem parcè, Samii pro more magistri,
Vivat, et innocuos præbeat herba cibos ;
Stet prope fagineo pellucida lymphæ catillo,
Sobriâque è puro pocula fonte bibat.
Additur huic scelerisque vacans, et casta juvenus,
Et rigidi mores, et sine labe manus ;
Qualis, veste nitens sacrâ, et lustralibus undis,
Surgis ad infensos, augur, iture deos.
Hoc ritu vixisse ferunt post rapta sagacem
Lumina Tiresian, Ogygiûmque Linon,
Et lare devoto profugum Calchanta, senémque
Orpheon, edomitæ sola per antra feris ;
Sic dapis exiguus, sic rivi potor Homerus
Dulichium vexit per freta longa virum,
Et per monstrificam Perseïæ Phœbados aulam,
Et vada fœmineis insidiosa sonis ;
Pérque tuas, rex ime, domos, ubi sanguine nigro
Dicitur umbrarum detinuisse greges.
Diis etenim sacer est vates, divûmque sacerdos ;
Spirat et occultum pectus, et ora, Jovem.
At tu, siquid agam, scitabere (si modò saltem
Esse putas tanti noscere siquid agam,)
Paciferum canimus cœlesti semine Regem,
Faustâque sacratis sæcula pacta libris ;
Vagitûmque Dei, et stabulantem paupere tecto,
Qui suprema suo cum Patre regna colit ;
Stelliparûmque polum, modulantésque æthere turmas,
Et subitò elisos ad sua fana deos.
Dona quidem dedimus Christi natalibus illa,
Illa sub auroram lux mihi prima tulit.
Te quoque pressa manent patriis meditata cicutis,
Tu mihi, cui recitem, iudicis instar eris.

ELEG. VII. ANNO ÆTATIS XIX.

NONDUM, blanda, tuas leges, Amathusia, nôram,
Et Paphio vacuum pectus ab igne fuit.
Sæpe cupidineas, puerilia tela, sagittas,
Atque tuum sprevi, maxime, numen, Amor.
Tu, puer, imbelles, dixi, transfige columbas ;
Conveniunt tenero mollia bella duci :
Aut de passeribus timidos age, parve, triumphos ;
Hæc sunt militiæ digna trophæa tuæ.
In genus humanum quid inania dirigis arma ?
Non valet in fortes ista pharetra viros.
Non tulit hoc Cyprius, neque enim deus ullus ad iras
Promptior, et duplici jam ferus igne calet.
Ver erat, et summæ radians per culmina villæ
Attulerat primam lux tibi, Maie, diem :
At mihi adhuc refugam quærebant lumina noctem,
Nec matutinum sustinuere jubar.
Astat Amor lecto, pictis Amor impiger alis ;
Prodidit astantem mota pharetra deum :
Prodidit et facies, et dulcè minantis ocelli,
Et quicquid puero dignum et Amore fuit.
Talis in æterno juvenis Sigeius Olympo
Miscet amatori pocula plena Jovi ;
Aut, qui formosas pellexit ad oscula nymphas,
Thiodamantæus Naiade raptus Hylas.
Addiderátque iras, sed et has decuisse putares,
Addiderátque truces, nec sine felle, minas.
“ Et miser, exemplo sapuisses tutiùs,” inquit,
“ Nunc, mea quid possit dextera, testis eris.
Inter et expertos vires numerabere nostras,
Et faciam vero per tua damna fidem.

Ipse ego, si nescis, strato Pythone superbum
Edomui Phœbum, cessit et ille mihi ;
Et quoties meminit Peneidos, ipse fatetur
Certiùs et graviùs tela nocere mea.
Me nequit adductum curvare peritiùs arcum,
Qui post terga solet vincere, Parthus eques :
Cydoniùsque mihi cedit venator, et ille
Inscius uxori qui necis author erat.
Est etiam nobis ingens quoque victus Orion,
Herculeæque manus, Herculeùsque comes.
Jupiter ipse licèt sua fulmina torqueat in me,
Hærebunt lateri spicula nostra Jovis.
Cætera, quæ dubitas, meliùs mea tela docebunt,
Et tua non levitèr corda petenda mihi.
Nec te, stulte, tuæ poterunt defendere Musæ,
Nec tibi Phœbæus porriget anguis opem.”
Dixit ; et, aurato quatiens mucrone sagittam,
Evolat in tepidos Cypridos ille sinus.
At mihi risuro tonuit ferus ore minaci,
Et mihi de puero non metus ullus erat.
Et modò quà nostri spatiantur in urbe Quirites,
Et modò villarum proxima rura placent.
Turba frequens, facièque simillima turba dearum,
Splendida per medias itque reditque vias :
Auctáque luce dies gemino fulgore coruscat ;
Fallor ? An et radios hinc quoque Phœbus habet ?
Hæc ego non fugi spectacula grata severus ;
Impetus et quò me fert juvenilis, agor ;
Lumina luminibus malè providus obvia misi,
Neve oculos potui continuisse meos.
Unam fortè aliis supereminuisse notabam ;
Principium nostri lux erat illa mali.
Sic Venus optaret mortalibus ipsa videri,
Sic regina deùm conspicienda fuit.

Hanc memor objecit nobis malus ille Cupido,
Solut et hos nobis texuit ante dolos.
Nec procul ipse vafer latuit, multæque sagittæ,
Et facis à tergo grande pependit onus :
Nec mora ; nunc ciliis hæsit, nunc virginis ori ;
Insilit hinc labiis, insidet inde genis :
Et quascunque agilis partes jaculator oberrat,
Hei mihi : mille locis pectus inerme ferit.
Protinùs insoliti subierunt corda furores ;
Uror amans intus, flammæque totus eram.
Interea, misero quæ jam mihi sola placebat,
Ablata est oculis, non reditura, meis.
Ast ego progredior tacitè querebundus, et excors,
Et dubius volui sæpe referre pedem.
Findor, et hæc remanet : sequitur pars altera votum,
Raptæque tam subitò gaudia flere juvat.
Sic dolet amissum proles Junonia cœlum,
Inter Lemniacos præcipitata focos :
Talis et abreptum solem respexit, ad Orcum
Vectus ab attonitis Amphiaræus equis.
Quid faciam infelix, et luctu victus ? Amores
Nec licet inceptos ponere, neve sequi.
O utinam, spectare semel mihi detur amatos
Vultus, et coram tristia verba loqui !
Forsitan et duro non est adamante creata,
Fortè nec ad nostras surdeat illa preces !
Crede mihi, nullus sic infelicitèr arsit ;
Ponar in exemplo primus et unus ego.
Parce, precor, teneri cùm sis deus ales amoris,
Pugnent officio nec tua facta tuo.
Jam tuus O ! certè est mihi formidabilis arcus,
Nate deâ, jaculis, nec minùs igne, potens :
Et tua fumabunt nostris altaria donis,
Solut et in superis tu mihi summus eris.

Deme meos tandem, verùm nec deme, furores ;
Nescio cur, miser est suaviter omnis amans :
Tu modò da facilis, posthæc mea siqua futura est,
Cuspis amatuos figat ut una duos.

HÆC ego mente olim lævâ, studiôque supino,
Nequitia posui vana trophæa meæ.
Scilicèt abreptum sic me malus impulit error,
Indocilisque ætas prava magistra fuit :
Donèc Socraticos umbrosa Academia rivos
Præbuit, admissum dedocuitque jugum.
Protinùs, extinctis ex illo tempore flammis,
Cincta rigent multo pectora nostra gelu.
Unde suis frigus metuit puer ipse sagittis,
Et Diomedeam vim timet ipsa Venus.

EPIGRAMMATUM LIBER.

I. IN PRODITIONEM BOMBARDICAM.

CUM simul in regem nuper satrapásque Britannos
Ausus es infandum, perfide Fauxe, nefas,
Fallor? An et mitis voluisti ex parte videri,
Et pensare malâ cum pietate scelus?
Scilicet hos alti missurus ad atria cœli,
Sulphureo curru, flammivolisque rotis:
Qualiter ille, feris caput inviolabile Parcís,
Liquit Iördanios turbine raptus agros.

II. IN EANDEM.

SICCINE tentâsti cœlo donâsse Iäcobum,
Quæ septemgemino, Bellua, monte lates?
Ni meliora tuum poterit dare munera numen,
Parce, precor, donis insidiosa tuis.
Ille quidem sine te consortia serus adivit
Astra, nec inferni pulveris usus ope.
Sic potiùs fœdos in cœlum pelle cucullos,
Et quot habet brutos Roma profana deos;
Namque hac aut aliâ nisi quemque adjuveris arte,
Crede mihi, cœli vix bene scandet iter.

III. IN EANDEM.

PURGATOREM animæ derisit Iäcobus ignem,
Et sine quo superûm non adeunda domus,
Frenduit hoc trinâ monstrum Latiale coronâ,
Movit et horrificum cornua dena minax.
“Et nec inultus,” ait, “temnes mea sacra, Britanne;
Supplicium, spretâ religione, dabis.
Et, si stelligeras unquam penetraveris arces,
Non nisi per flammâs triste patebit iter.”
O quàm funesto cecinisti proxima vero,
Verbâque ponderibus vix caritura suis!
Nam prope Tartareo sublimè rotatus ab igni,
Ibat ad æthereas, umbra perusta, plagas.

IV. IN EANDEM.

QUEM modò Roma suis devoverat impia diris,
Et Styge damnârat, Tænarióque sinu;
Hunc, vice mutatâ, jam tollere gestit ad astra,
Et cupit ad superos evehere usque deos.

V. IN INVENTOREM BOMBARDÆ.

IAPETIONIDEM laudavit cæca vetustas,
Qui tulit ætheream solis ab axe facem;
At mihi major erit, qui lurida creditur arma,
Et trifidum fulmen, surripuisse Jovi.

VI. AD LEONORAM, ROMÆ CANENTEM.¹

ANGELUS unicuique suus, sic credite gentes,
 Obtigit æthereis ales ab ordinibus.
 Quid mirum, Leonora, tibi si gloria major?
 Nam tua præsentem vox sonat ipsa Deum.
 Aut Deus, aut vacui certè mens tertia cœli,
 Per tua secretò guttura serpit agens;
 Serpit agens, facilisque docet mortalia corda
 Sensim immortalis assuescere posse sono.
 Quòd si cuncta quidè̃m Deus est, per cunctàque fusus,
 In te unâ loquitur, cætera mutus habet.

VII. AD EANDEM.

ALTERA Torquatum cepit Leonora poetam,
 Cujus ab insano cessit amore furens.
 Ah! miser ille tuo quantò feliciùs ævo
 Perditus, et propter te, Leonora, foret!
 Et te Pieriâ sensisset voce canentem
 Aurea maternæ fila movere lyræ!
 Quamvis Dirçæo torsisset lumina Pentheo
 Sævior, aut totus desipuisset iners,
 Tu tamen errantes cæcâ vertigine sensus
 Voce eadem poteras composuisse tuâ;
 Et poteras, ægro spirans sub corde, quietem
 Flexanimo cantu restituisset sibi.

¹ Adriana of Mantua, for her beauty surnamed *the Fair*, and her daughter Leonora Baroni, the lady whom Milton celebrates in these three Latin Epigrams, were esteemed by their contemporaries the finest singers in the world.

VIII. AD EANDEM.

CREDULA quid liquidam Sirena, Neapoli, jactas,
 Claráque Parthenopes fana Achelöiados ;
 Littoreámque tuâ defunctam Naiada ripâ,
 Corpora Chalcidico sacra dedisse rogo ?
 Illa quidém vivitque, et amœnâ Tibridis undâ
 Mutavit rauci murmura Pausilipi.
 Illic, Romulidum studiis ornata secundis,
 Atque homines cantu detinet atque deos.

IX. IN SALMASII HUNDREDAM.

QUIS expedit Salmasio suam *Hundredam*,
 Picámque docuit verba nostra conari ?
 Magister artis venter, et Jacobæi
 Centum, exulantis viscera marsupii regis.
 Quòd si dolosi spes refulserit nummi,
 Ipse, Antichristi qui modò primatum Papæ
 Minatus uno est dissipare sufflatu,
 Cantabit ultrò Cardinalitium melos.

X. IN SALMASIUM.

GAUDETE scombri, et quicquid est piscium salo,
 Qui frigidâ hyeme incolitis argentes freta !
 Vestrûm misertus ille Salmasius, Eques
 Bonus, amicire nuditatem cogitat ;
 Chartæque largus apparat papyrinos
 Vobis cucullos, præferentes Claudii
 Insignia, noménque et decus, Salmasii :
 Gestetis ut per omne cetarium forum
 Equitis clientes, scriniis mungentium
 Cubito virorum, et capsulis, gratissimos.

XI. IN MORUM.

GALLI ex concubitu gravidam te, Pontia, Mori,
Quis benè moratam, morigerámque, neget ?

XII. APOLOGUS DE RUSTICO ET HERO.

RUSTICUS ex malo sapidissima poma quotannis
Legit, et urbano lecta dedit domino :
Hinc, incredibili fructûs dulcedine captus,
Malum ipsam in proprias transtulit areolas.
Hactenûs illa ferax, sed longo debilis ævo,
Mota solo assueto, protinûs aret iners.
Quod tandem ut patuit domino, spe lusus inani,
Damnavit celeres in sua damna manus ;
Atque ait, " Heu quanto satius fuit illa coloni,
Parva licèt, grato dona tulisse animo !
Possem ego avaritiam frænare, gulámque voracem :
Nunc periere mihi et fœtus, et ipse parens."

XIII. AD CHRISTINAM SUECORUM REGINAM, NOMINE
CROMWELLI.

BELLIPOTENS virgo, septem regina trionum,
Christina, Arctoï lucida stella poli !
Cernis, quas merui durâ sub casside, rugas,
Ut' que senex, armis impiger, ora tero :
Invia fatorum dum per vestigia nitor,
Exequor et populi fortia jussa manu.
Ast tibi submittit frontem reverentior umbra :
Nec sunt hi vultus regibus usque truces.

SILVARUM LIBER.

PSALM CXIV.

ἸΣΡΑΗΛ ὅτε παῖδες, ὅτ' ἀγλαὰ φύλ' Ἰακώβου
Αἰγύπτιον λίπε δῆμον, ἀπεχθέα, βαρβαρόφωνον,
Δὴ τότε μόνον ἔην ὅσιον γένος υἱὲς Ἰοῦδα·
Ἐν δε Θεὸς λαοῖσι μέγα κρείων βασίλευεν·
Εἶδε, καὶ ἐντροπάδην φύγαδ' ἐρρώησε θάλασσα
Κύματι εἰλυμένη ῥοθίῳ, ὃ δ' ἄρ' ἐστυφελίχθη
Ἰρὸς Ἰορδάνης ποτὶ ἀργυροειδέα πηγὴν·
Ἐκ δ' ὄρεα σκαρθμοῖσιν ἀπειρέσια κλονέοντο,
Ὡς κριοὶ σφριγόωντες εὐτραφερῶ ἐν ἁλῶν·
Βαιοτέραι δ' ἅμα πάσαι ἀνασκίρτησαν ἐρίπναι,
Ὅϊα παραὶ σύριγτι φίλῃ ὑπὸ μητέρι ἄρνες.
Τίπτε σύγ', αἰνὰ θάλασσα, πέλωρ φύγαδ' ἐρρώησας,
Κύματι εἰλυμένη ῥοθίῳ ; τί δ' ἄρ' ἐστυφελίχθης,
Ἰρὸς Ἰορδάνη, ποτὶ ἀργυροειδέα πηγὴν ;
Τίπτ', ὄρεα, σκαρθμοῖσιν ἀπειρέσια κλονέεσθε,
Ὡς κριοὶ σφριγόωντης εὐτραφερῶ ἐν ἁλῶν ;
Βαιοτέραι, τί δ' ἄρ' ὑμῆς ἀνασκιρτήσατ', ἐρίπναι,
Ὅϊα παραὶ σύριγτι φίλῃ ὑπὸ μητέρι ἄρνες ;
Σείεο, γαῖα, τρέουσα Θεὸν μεγάλ' ἐκτυπέοντα,
Γαῖα, Θεὸν τρέιους' ὑπατον σέβας Ἰσσακίδαο,
Ὅς τε καὶ ἐκ σπιλάδων ποταμοὺς χέε μορμύροντας,
Κρήνηντ' ἀεναὸν πέτρης ἀπὸ δακρυοέσεως.

*philosophus ad regem quendam, qui eum ignotum et
insontem inter reos fortè captum inscius damna-
verat, τὴν ἐπὶ θανάτῳ πορευόμενος, hæc subitò misit.*

ὦ ἄνα, εἰ ὀλέσῃς με τὸν ἔννομον, οὐδέ τινα ἀνδρῶν
Δεινὸν ὅλως δράσαντα, σοφώτατον ἴσθι κάρηνον
Ῥηϊδιῶς ἀφέλοιο, τὸ δ' ὕστερον αὖθι νοήσεις,
Μαψιδίως δ' ἄρ' ἔπειτα τεὸν πρὸς θυμὸν ὀδυρῇ,
Τοῖον δ' ἐκ πόλιος περιώννυμον ἄλκαρ ὀλέσσας.

IN EFFIGIEI EJUS SCULPTOREM.

Ἀμαθεῖ γεγράφθαι χειρὶ τήνδε μὲν εἰκόνα
Φαίης τάχ' ἂν, πρὸς εἶδος αὐτοφυὲς βλέπων.
Τὸν δ' ἐκτυπωτὸν οὐκ ἐπιγνόντες, φίλοι,
Γελάτε φαύλου δυσμίμημα ζωγράφου.

IN OBITUM PROCANCELLARII MEDICI.¹

ANNO ÆTATIS XVII.

PARERE Fati discite legibus,
Manúsque Parcæ jam date supplices,
Qui pendulum telluris orbem
Iäpeti colitis nepotes.

¹ This Ode is on the death of Doctor John Goslyn, master of Caius College, and king's professor of medicine at Cambridge; who died while a second time vice-chancellor of that university, in October 1626.

Vos si relicto mors vaga Tænaro
Semel vocârit flebilis, heu ! moræ
Tentantur incassum, dolique ;
Per tenebras Stygis ire certum est.
Si destinatam pellerè dextera
Mortem valeret, non ferus Hercules
Nessi venenatus cruore,
Æmathiâ jacuisset Oetâ.
Nec fraude turpi Palladis invidæ
Vidisset occisum Ilion Hectora, aut
Quem larva Pelidis peremit
Ense Locro, Jove lacrymante.
Si triste fatum verba Hecatæia
Fugare possint, Telegoni parens
Vixisset infamis, potentique
Ægiali soror usa virgâ.
Numénque trinum fallere si queant
Artes medentûm, ignotâque gramina,
Non gnarus herbarum Machaon
Eurypyli cecidisset hastâ :
Læsisset et nec te, Philyreie,
Sagitta Echidnæ perlita sanguine ;
Nec tela te fulménque avitum,
Cæse puer genitricis alvo.
Tuque, O alumno major Apolline,
Gentis togatæ cui regimen datum,
Froncosa quem nunc Cirrha luget,
Et mediis Helicon in undis,
Jam præfuisses Palladio gregi
Lætus, superstes ; nec sine gloria ;
Nec puppe lustrâsses Charontis
Horribiles barathri recessus.
At fila rupit Persephone tua,
Irata, cùm te viderit artibus,

Succóque pollenti, tot atris
Faucibus eripuisse mortis.
Colende Præses, membra, precor, tua
Molli quiescant cespite, et ex tuo
Crescant rosæ calthæque busto,
Purpureóque hyacinthus ore.
Sit mite de te iudicium Æaci,
Subrideátque Ætnæa Proserpina ;
Intérque felices perennis
Elysio spatiere campo.

IN QUINTUM NOVEMBRIS.

ANNO ÆTATIS XVII.

JAM pius extremâ veniens Iäcobus ab arcto
Teucrigenas populos, latéque patentia regna
Albionum, tenuit ; jámque inviolabile fœdus
Sceptra Caledoniis conjunxerat Anglica Scotis :
Pacificúsque novo, felix divésque, sedebat
In solio, occultique doli securus et hostis :
Cùm ferus ignifluo regnans Acheronte tyrannus,
Eumenidum pater, æthereo vagus exul Olympo,
Fortè per immensum terrarum erraverat orbem,
Dinumerans sceleris socios, vernásque fideles,
Participes regni post funera mœsta futuros :
Hïc tempestates medio ciet aëre diras,
Illic unanimes odium struit inter amicos,
Armat et invictas in mutua viscera gentes ;
Regnâque oliviferâ vertit florentia pace :
Et quoscunque videt puræ virtutis amantes,
Hos cupit adjicere imperio, fraudúmque magister

Tentat inaccessum sceleri corrumpere pectus ;
Insidiásque locat tacitas, cassésque latentes
Tendit, ut incautos rapiat ; ceu Caspia tigris
Insequitur trepidam deserta per avia prædam
Nocte sub illuni, et somno nictantibus astris.

Talibus infestat populos Summanus et urbes,
Cinctus cæruleæ fumanti turbine flammæ.
Jámque fluentisonis albentia rupibus arva
Apparent, et terra Deo dilecta marino,
Cui nomen dederat quondam Neptunia proles ;
Amphitryoniaden qui non dubitavit atrocem,
Æquore tranato, furiali poscere bello,
Ante expugnatae crudelia sæcula Trojæ.

At simul hanc, opibúsque et festâ pace beatam,
Aspicit, et pingues donis Cerealibus agros,
Quódque magis doluit, venerantem numina veri
Sancta Dei populum, tandem suspiria rupit
Tartareos ignes et luridum olentia sulphur ;
Qualia Trinacriâ trux ab Jove clausus in Ætnâ
Efflat tabifico monstrosus ob ore Tiphœus.
Ignescent oculi, stridétque adamantinus ordo
Dentis, ut armorum fragor, ictáque cuspide cuspis.
“ Atque pererrato solum hoc lacrymabile mundo
Inveni,” dixit ; “ gens hæc mihi sola rebellis,
Contemtrixque jugi, nostrâque potentior arte.
Illa tamen, mea si quicquam tentamina possunt,
Non feret hoc impunè diu, non ibit inulta.”
Hactenus ; et piceis liquido natat aëre pennis :
Quá volat, adversi præcursant agmine venti,
Densantur nubes, et crebra tonitrua fulgent.

Jámque pruinosas velox superaverat Alpes,
Et tenet Ausoniæ fines ; à parte sinistrâ
Nimbifer Appenninus erat, priscique Sabini,
Dextra veneficiis infamis Hetruria, nec non

Te furtiva, Tibris, Thetidi videt oscula dantem ;
Hinc Mavortigenæ consistit in arce Quirini.
Reddiderant dubiam jam sera crepuscula lucem,
Cum circumgreditur totam Tricoronifer urbem,
Panificósque deos portat, scapulisque virorum
Evehitur ; præeunt submisso poplite reges,
Et mendicantûm series longissima fratrum ;
Cereâque in manibus gestant funalia cæci,
Cimmeriis nati in tenebris, vitâmq; trahentes :
Templa dein multis subeunt lucentia tædis,
(Vesper erat sacer iste Petro) fremitûsque canentûm
Sæpe tholos implet vacuos et inane locorum.
Qualitèr exululat Bromius, Bromiique caterva,
Orgia cantantes in Echionio Aracyntho,
Dum tremit attonitus vitreis Asopus in undis,
Et procul ipse cavâ responsat rupe Cithæron.

His igitur tandem solenni more peractis,
Nox senis amplexus Erebi taciturna reliquit,
Præcipitêsque impellit equos stimulante flagello,
Captum oculis Typhlonta, Melanchætémque ferocem,
Atque Acherontæo prognatam patre Siopen
Torpidam, et hirsutis horrentem Phrica capillis.
Interea regum domitor, Phlegetontius hæres,
Ingreditur thalamos, neque enim secretus adulter
Producit steriles molli sine pellice noctes ;
At vix compositos somnus claudebat ocellos,
Cum niger umbrarum dominus, rectórque silentûm,
Prædatórque hominum, falsâ sub imagine tectus
Astitit ; assumptis micuerunt tempora canis,
Barba sinus promissa tegit, cineracea longo
Syrmate verrit humum vestis, pendétque cucullus
Vertice de raso ; et, ne quicquam desit ad artes,
Cannabeo lumbos constrinxit fune salaces,
Tarda fenestratis figens vestigia calceis.

Talis, uti fama est, vastâ Franciscus eremo
Tetra vagabatur solus per lustra ferarum,
Silvestrique tulit genti pia verba salutis
Impius, atque lupos domuit, Libycósque leones.

Subdolus at tali Serpens velatus amictu
Solvit in has fallax ora execrantia voces ;
“ Dormis, nate ? Etiamne tuos sopor opprimit artus ?
Immemor, O, fidei, pecorúmque oblite tuorum !
Dum cathedram, venerande, tuam, diademáque triplex,
Ridet Hyperboreo gens barbara nata sub axe ;
Dúmque pharetrati spernunt tua jura Britanni :
Surge, age ; surge, piger, Latius quem Cæsar adorat,
Cui reserata patet convexi janua cœli,
Turgentes animos, et fastus frange procaces,
Sacrilegique sciant, tua quid maledictio possit,
Et quid Apostolicæ possit custodia clavis ;
Et memor Hesperiae disjectam ulciscere classem,
Mersáque Iberorum lato vexilla profundo,
Sanctorúmque cruci tot corpora fixa probrosæ,
Thermodoontëâ nuper regnante puellâ.
At tu si tenero mavis torpescere lecto,
Crescentésque negas hosti contundere vires ;
Tyrrhenum implebit numeroso milite pontum,
Signáque Aventino ponet fulgentia colle :
Reliquias veterum franget, flammisque cremabit ;
Sacráque calcabit pedibus tua colla profanis,
Cujus gaudebant soleis dare basia reges.
Nec tamen hunc bellis et aperto Marte lacesces ;
Irritus ille labor : tu callidus utere fraude :
Quælibet hæreticis disponere retia fas est.
Jámque ad consilium extremis rex magnus ab oris
Patricios vocat, et procerum de stirpe creatos,
Grandævósque patres, trabeâ canisque verendos ;
Hos tu membratim poteris conspergere in auras,

Atque dare in cineres, nitrati pulveris igne
Ædibus injecto, quâ convenere, sub imis.
Protinûs ipse igitur, quoscunque habet Anglia fidos,
Propositi, factique, mone : quisquâ mne tuorum
Audebit summi non jussa facessere Papæ ?
Perculsósque metu subito, casúque stupentes,
Invadat vel Gallus atrox, vel sævus Iberus.
Sæcula sic illic tandem Mariana redibunt,
Túque in belligeros iterum dominaberis Anglos.
Et, nequid timeas, divos divásque secundas
Accipe, quotque tuis celebrantur numina fastis.”
Dixit ; et, adscitos ponens malefidus amictus,
Fugit ad infandam, regnum illætabile, Lethen.

Jam rosea Eoas pandens Tithonia portas
Vestit inauratas redeunti lumine terras ;
Mœstáque, adhuc nigri deplorans funera nati,
Irrigat ambrosiis montana cacumina guttis :
Cùm somnos pepulit stellatæ janitor aulæ,
Nocturnos visus et somnia grata revolvens.

Est locus æternâ septus caligine noctis,
Vasta ruinosi quondam fundamina tecti,
Nunc torvi spelunca Phoni, Prodotæque bilinguis,
Effera quos uno peperit Discordia partu.
Hîc inter cæmenta jacent, præruptáque saxa,
Ossa inhumata virûm, et trajecta cadavera ferro ;
Hîc Dolus intortis semper sedet ater ocellis,
Jurgiáque, et stimulis armata Calumnia fauces,
Et Furor, atque viæ moriendi mille videntur,
Et Timor, exanguisque locum circumvolat Horror ;
Perpetuòque leves per muta silentia Manes
Exululant, tellus et sanguine conscia stagnat.
Ipsi etiam pavidi latitant penetralibus antri
Et Phonos, et Prodotes ; nullóque sequente per antrum,
Antrum horrens, scopulosum, atrum feralibus umbris,

Diffugiunt fontes, et retrò lumina vortunt :
Hos pugiles Romæ per sæcula longa fideles
Evocat antistes Babylonius, atque ita fatur.

“ Finibus occiduis circumfusus incolit æquor
Gens exosa mihi ; prudens Natura negavit
Indignam penitùs nostro conjungere mundo ;
Illuc, sic jubeo, celeri contendite gressu,
Tartareóque leves diffilentur pulvere in auras
Et rex et pariter satrapæ, scelerata propago :
Et, quotquot fidei caluere cupidine veræ,
Consilii socios adhibete, operisque ministros.”
Finierat ; rigidi cupidé paruere gemelli.

Interea longo flectens curvamine cœlos
Despicit æthereâ Dominus qui fulgurat arce,
Vanâque perversæ ridet conamina turbæ ;
Atqui sui causam populi volet ipse tueri.

Esse ferunt spatium, quâ distat ab Aside terrâ
Fertilis Europe, et spectat Mareotidas undas ;
Hîc turris posita est Titanidos ardua Famæ,
Ærea, lata, sonans, rutilis vicinior astris
Quàm superimpositum vel Athos vel Pelion Ossæ.
Mille fores aditúsque patent, totidémque fenestræ ;
Amplâque per tenues translucent atria muros :
Excitat hîc varios plebs agglomerata susurros ;
Qualitèr instrepitant circum mulctralia bombis
Agmina muscarum, aut texto per ovilia junco,
Dum Canis æstivum cœli petit ardua culmen.
Ipsa quidem summâ sedet ultrix matris in arce ;
Auribus innumeris cinctum caput eminet olli,
Queis sonitum exiguum trahit, atque levissima captat
Murmura, ab extremis patuli confinibus orbis.
Nec tot, Aristoride, servator inique juvencæ
Isidos, immiti volvebas lumina vultu,
Lumina non unquam tacito nutantia somno,

Lumina subjectas latè spectantia terras.
Istis illa solet loca luce carentia sæpe
Perlustrare, etiam radianti impervia soli :
Millenisque loquax auditâque visâque linguis
Cuilibet effundit temeraria ; verâque mendax
Nunc minuit, modò confictis sermonibus auget

Sed tamen à nostro meruisti carmine laudes
Fama, bonum quo non aliud veracius ullum,
Nobis digna cani, nec te memorâsse pigebit
Carmine tam longo ; servati scilicèt Angli
Officiis, vaga diva, tuis, tibi reddimus æqua.
Te Deus, æternos motu qui temperat ignes,
Fulmine præmisso alloquitur, terrâque tremante ;
“ Fama siles ? An te latet impia Papistarum
Conjurata cohors in méque meósque Britannos,
Et nova sceptrigero cædes meditata Iäcobo ?”

Nec plura ; illa statim sensit mandata Tonantis,
Et, satis ante fugax, stridentes induit alas,
Induit et variis exilia corpora plumis ;
Dextra tubam gestat Temesæo ex ære sonoram.
Nec mora, jam pennis cedentes remigat auras,
Atque parum est cursu celeres prævertere nubes :
Jam ventos, jam solis equos, post terga reliquit :
Et primò Angliacas, solito de more, per urbes
Ambiguas voces, incertâque murmura, spargit :
Mox arguta dolos, et detestabile vulgat
Proditionis opus, nec non facta horrida dictu,
Authorésque addit sceleris, nec garrula cæcis
Insidiis loca structa silet ; stupuere relatis
Et paritèr juvenes, paritèr tremuere puellæ,
Effœtique senes paritèr : tantæque ruinæ
Sensus ad ætatem subitò penetraverat omnem.

Attamen interea populi miserescit ab alto
Æthereus Pater, et crudelibus obstitit ausis

Papicolûm ; capti pœnas raptantur ad acres :
 At pia thura Deo, et grati solvuntur honores ;
 Compita læta focis genialibus omnia fumant ;
 Turba choros juvenilis agit : Quintóque Novembris
 Nulla dies toto occurrit celebratior anno.

IN OBITUM PRÆSULIS ELIENSIS.¹

ANNO ÆTATIS XVII.

ADHUC madentes rore squalebant genæ,
 Et sicca nondum lumina
 Adhuc liquentis imbre turgebant salis,
 Quem nuper effudi pius,
 Dum mœsta charo justa persolvi rogo
 Wintoniensis Præsulis.
 Cùm centilinguis Fama, proh ! semper mali
 Cladisque vera nuntia,
 Spargit per urbes divitis Britanniaë,
 Populósque Neptuno satos,
 Cessisse morti, et ferreis sororibus,
 Te, generis humani decus,
 Qui rex sacrorum illâ fuisti in insulâ
 Quæ nomen Anguillæ tenet.
 Tunc inquietum pectus irâ protinùs
 Ebulliebat fervidâ,
 Tumulis potentem sæpe devovens deam :
 Nec vota Naso in Ibida
 Concepit alto diriora pectore ;
 Graiúsque vates parciùs

¹ Nicholas Fulton, Bishop of Ely, died October 5, 1656, not many days after Bishop Andrews, before celebrated. He had been master of Pembroke Hall, as well as Bishop Andrews.

Turpem Lycambis execratus est dolum,
Sponsámque Neobulen suam.
At ecce! diras ipse dum fundo graves,
Et imprecor neci necem,
Audísse tales videor attonitus sonos
Leni, sub aurâ, flamine :
“ Cæcos furores pone ; pone vitream
Bilémque, et irritas minas :
Quid temerè violas non nocenda numina,
Subitòque ad iras percita ?
Non est, ut arbitraris elusus miser,
Mors atra Noctis filia,
Erebóve patre creta, sive Erinnye,
Vastóve nata sub Chao ;
Ast illa, cœlo missa stellato, Dei
Messés ubique colligit ;
Animásque mole carneâ reconditas
In lucem et auras evocat :
Ut cùm fugaces excitant Horæ diem,
Themidos Jovisque filiæ ;
Et sempiterni ducit ad vultus Patris :
At justa raptat impios
Sub regna furvi luctuosa Tartari,
Sedésque subterraneas.”
Hanc ut vocantem lætus audivi, citò
Fœdum reliqui carcerem,
Volatílésque faustus inter milites
Ad astra sublimis feror :
Vates ut olim raptus ad cœlum senex,
Auriga currûs ignei.
Non me Boötis terruere lucidi
Sarraca tarda frigore, aut
Formidolosi Scorpionis brachia ;
Non ensis, Orion, tuus.

Prætervolavi fulgidi solis globum,
 Longèque sub pedibus deam
 Vidi triformem, dum coërcebat suos
 Frænis dracones aureis.
 Erraticorum siderum per ordines,
 Per lacteas vehor plagas,
 Velocitatem sæpe miratus novam ;
 Donec nitentes ad fores
 Ventum est Olympi, et regiam crystallinam, et
 Stratum smaragdis atrium.
 Sed hîc tacebo ; nam quis effari queat,
 Oriundus humano patre,
 Amœnitates illius loci ? Mihi
 Sat est in æternum frui.

NATURAM NON PATI SENIUM.¹

HEU, quàm perpetuis erroribus acta fatiscit
 Avia mens hominum, tenebrisque immersa profundis
 Oedipodioniam volvit sub pectore noctem !
 Quæ vesana suis metiri facta deorum
 Audet, et incisas leges adamante perenni
 Assimilare suis, nullóque solubile sæclo
 Consilium fati perituris alligat horis !
 Ergóne marcescet sulcantibus obsita rugis
 Naturæ facies, et rerum publica mater
 Omniparum contracta uterum sterilescet ab ævo ?
 Et, se fassa senem, malè certis passibus ibit
 Sidereum tremebunda caput ? Num tetra vetustas,
 Annorúmque æterna fames, squalórque, sitúsque,

¹ This was an academical exercise, written in 1628, to oblige one of the fellows of Christ's College.

Sidera vexabunt ? An et insatiabile Tempus
Esuriet Coelum, rapiétque in viscera patrem ?
Heu, potuitne suas imprudens Jupiter arces
Hoc contra munisse nefas, et Temporis isto
Exemisse malo, gyrósque dedisse perennes ?
Ergo erit ut quandoque sono dilapsa tremendo
Convexi tabulata ruant, atque obvius ictu
Stridat uterque polus, superâque ut Olympius aulâ
Decidat, horribilisque relectâ Gorgone Pallas ;
Qualis in Ægæam proles Junonia Lemnon
Deturbata sacro cecidit de limine cœli ?
Tu quoque, Phœbe, tui casus imitabere nati ;
Præcipiti curru, subitâque ferere ruinâ
Pronus, et extinctâ fumabit lampade Nereus,
Et dabit attonito feralia sibila ponto.

Tunc etiam aërei divulsis sedibus Hæmi
Dissultabit apex, imóque allisa barathro
Terrebunt Stygium dejecta Ceraunia Ditem,
In superos quibus usus erat, fraternâque bella.

At Pater Omnipotens, fûndatis fortiùs astris,
Consuluit rerum summæ, certóque peregit
Pondere fatorum lances, atque ordine summo
Singula perpetuum jussit servare tenorem.
Volvitur hinc lapsu mundi rota prima diurno ;
Raptat et ambitos sociâ vertigine cœlos.
Tardior haud solito Saturnus, et acer ut olim
Fulmineum rutilat cristatâ casside Mavors.
Floridus æternum Phœbus juvenile coruscat,
Nec fovet effœtas loca per declivia terras
Devexo temone deus ; sed, semper amicâ
Luce potens, eadem currit per signa rotarum.
Surgit odoratis paritèr formosus ab Indis,
Æthereum pecus albenti qui cogit Olympo,
Manè vocans, et serus agens in pascua cœli ;

Temporis et gemino dispertit regna colore.
 Fulget, obitque vices alterno Delia cornu,
 Cæruleúmque ignem paribus complectitur ulnis.
 Nec variant elementa fidem, solitóque fragore
 Lurida percussas jaculantur fulmina rupes.
 Nec per inane furit leviori murmure Corus,
 Stringit et armiferos æquali horrore Gelonos
 Trux Aquilo, spirátque hyemem, nimbósque volutat.
 Utque solet, Siculi diverberat ima Pelori
 Rex maris, et raucâ circumstrepit æquora conchâ
 Oceani Tubicen, nec vastâ mole minorem
 Ægæona ferunt dorso Balearica cete.
 Sed neque, Terra, tibi sæcli vigor ille vetusti
 Priscus abest, servátque suum Narcissus odorem,
 Et puer ille suum tenet, et puer ille, decorem,
 Phœbe, tuúsque, et, Cypri, tuus ; nec ditior olim
 Terra datum sceleri celavit montibus aurum
 Conscia, vel sub aquis gemmas. Sic denique in ævum
 Ibit cunctarum series justissima rerum ;
 Donec flamma orbem populabitur ultima, latè
 Circumplexa polos, et vasti culmina cœli ;
 Ingentique rogo flagrabit machina mundi.

DE IDEA PLATONICA QUEMADMODUM
 ARISTOTELES INTELLEXIT.

DICITE, sacrorum præsides nemorum deæ,
 Túque, O noveni perbeata numinis
 Memoria mater, quæque in immenso procul
 Antro recumbis, otiosa Æternitas,
 Monumenta servans, et ratas leges Jovis,

Cœlique fastos, atque ephemeridas Deûm ;
Quis ille primus, cujus ex imagine
Natura solers finxit humanum genus,
Æternus, incorruptus, æquævus polo.
Unûsque et universus, exemplar Dei ?
Haud ille Palladis gemellus innubæ
Interna proles insidet menti Jovis ;
Sed quamlibèt natura sit communior,
Tamen seorsùs extat ad morem unius,
Et, mira, certo stringitur spatio loci :
Seu sempiternus ille siderum comes
Cœli pererrat ordines decemplicis,
Citimùmve terris incolit lunæ globum :
Sive, inter animas corpus adituras sedens,
Obliviosas torpet ad Lethes aquas :
Sive in remotâ fortè terrarum plagâ
Incedit ingens hominis archetypus gigas,
Et diis tremendus erigit celsum caput,
Atlante major portitore siderum.
Non, cui profundum cæcitas lumen dedit,
Dircæus augur vidit hunc alto sinu ;
Non hunc silente nocte Plëiones nepos
Vatum sagaci præpes ostendit choro ;
Non hunc sacerdos novit Assyrius, licèt
Longos vetusti commemoret atavos Nini,
Priscùmque Belon, inclytùmque Osiridem.
Non ille, trino gloriosus nomine,
Ter magnus Hermes, ut sit arcani sciens,
Talem reliquit Isidis cultoribus.
At tu, perenne ruris Academi decus,
(Hæc monstra si tu primus induxti scholis,)
Jam jam poetas, urbis exules tuæ,
Revocabis, ipse fabulator maximus ;
Aut institutor ipse migrabis foras.

AD PATREM.

NUNC mea Pierios cupiam per pectora fontes
Irriguas torquere vias, totùmque per ora
Volvere laxatum gemino de vertice rivum ;
Ut, tenues oblita sonos, audacibus alis
Surgat in officium venerandi Musa parentis.
Hoc utcunque tibi gratum, pater optime, carmen
Exiguum meditatur opus ; nec novimus ipsi
Aptiùs à nobis quæ possunt munera donis
Respondere tuis, quamvis nec maxima possint
Respondere tuis, nedum ut par gratia donis
Esse queat, vacuis quæ redditur arida verbis.
Sed tamen hæc nostros ostendit pagina census,
Et quod habemus opum chartâ numeravimus istâ,
Quæ mihi sunt nullæ, nisi quas dedit aurea Clio,
Quas mihi semoto somni peperere sub antro,
Et nemoris laureta sacri Parnassides umbræ.

Nec tu vatis opus divinum despice carmen,
Quo nihil æthereos ortus, et semina cœli,
Nil magis humanam commendat origine mentem,
Sancta Promethææ retinens vestigia flammæ.
Carmen amant superi, tremebundâque Tartara carmen
Ima ciere valet, divósque ligare profundos,
Et triplici duro Manes adamante coercet.
Carmines sepositi retegunt arcana futuri
Phœbades, et tremulæ pallentes ora Sibyllæ :
Carmina sacrificus sollennes pangit ad aras,
Aurea seu sternit motantem cornua taurum ;
Seu cùm fata sagax fumantibus abdita fibris
Consultit, et tepidis Parcam scrutatur in extis.
Nos etiam, patrium tunc cùm repetemus Olympum,

Æternæque moræ stabunt immobilis ævi,
Ibimus auratis per cœli templa coronis ;
Dulcia suaviloquo sociantes carmina plectro,
Astra quibus, geminique poli convexa, sonabunt.
Spiritus et rapidos qui circumdat igneus orbes,
Nunc quoque sidereis intercinit ipse choreis
Immortale melos, et inenarrabile carmen ;
Torrida dum rutilus compescit sibila serpens,
Demissóque ferox gladio mansuescit Orion ;
Stellarum nec sentit onus Maurusius Atlas.
Carmina regales epulas ornare solebant,
Cùm nondum luxus, vastæque immensa vorago
Nota gulæ, et modico spumabat cœna Lyæo.
Tum, de more sedens festa ad convivia vates,
Æsculeâ intonsos redimitus ab arbore crines,
Heroúmque actus, imitandâque gesta canebat,
Et chaos, et positi latè fundamina mundi,
Reptantésque deos, et alentes numina glandes,
Et nondum Ætnæo quæsitum fulmen ab antro.
Denique quid vocis modulamen inane juvabit,
Verborum sensúsque vacans, numerique loquacis ?
Silvestres decet iste choros, non Orphea, cantus,
Qui tenuit fluvios, et quercubus addidit aures,
Carminè, non citharâ ; simulachrâque functa canendo
Compulit in lacrymas : Habet has à carmine laudes.

Nec tu perge, precor, sacras contemnere Musas
Nec vanas inopésque puta, quarum ipse peritus
Munere mille sonos números componis ad aptos ;
Millibus et vocem modulis variare canoram
Doctus, Arionii meritò sis nominis hæres.
Nunc tibi quid mirum, si me genuisse poetam
Contigerit, charo si tam propè sanguine juncti
Cognatas artes, studiumque affine, sequamur ?
Ipse volens Phœbus se dispertire duobus,

Altera dona mihi, dedit altera dona parenti ;
Dividuúmque Deum, genitórque puérque, tenemus.

Tu tamen ut simules teneras odisse Camœnas,
Non odisse reor ; neque enim, pater, ire jubebas
Quà via lata patet, quà pronior area lucri,
Certáque condendi fulget spes aurea nummi :
Nec rapis ad leges, malè custoditáque gentis
Jura, nec insulsis damnas clamoribus aures ;
Sed, magis excultam cupiens ditescere mentem,
Me procul urbano strepitu, secessibus altis
Abductum, Aoniæ jucunda per otia ripæ,
Phœbæo lateri comitem sinis ire beatum.
Officium chari taceo commune parentis ;
Me poscunt majora : tuo, pater optime, sumptu
Cùm mihi Romuleæ patuit facundia linguæ,
Et Latii veneres, et quæ Jovis ora decebant
Grandia magniloquis elata vocabula Graiis,
Addere suasisti quos jactat Gallia flores ;
Et quam degeneri novus Italus ore loquelam
Fundit, barbaricos testatus voce tumultus ;
Quæ'que Palæstinus loquitur mysteria vates.
Denique quicquid habet cœlum, subjectáque cœlo
Terra parens, terræque et cœlo interfluus aer,
Quicquid et unda tegit, pontique agitabile marmor,
Per te nôsse licet, per te, si nôsse libebit :
Dimotâque venit spectanda scientia nube,
Nudâque conspicuos inclinat ad oscula vultus,
Ni fugisse velim, ni sit libâsse molestum.

I nunc, confer opes, quisquis malesanus avitas
Austriaci gazas, Perüanaque regna, præoptas.
Quæ potuit majora pater tribuisse, vel ipse
Jupiter, excepto, donâsset ut omnia, cœlo ?
Non potiora dedit, quamvis et tuta fuissent,
Publica qui juveni commisit lumina nato,

Atque Hyperionios currus, et fræna diei,
 Et circùm undantem radiatâ luce tiaram.
 Ergo ego, jam doctæ pars quamlibet ima catervæ,
 Victrices hederas inter laurósque sedebo ;
 Jámq̃ue nec obscurus populo miscebor inertī,
 Vitabúntque oculos vestigia nostra profanos.
 Este procul, vigiles Curæ, procul este, Querelæ,
 Invidiæque acies transverso tortilis hirquo,
 Sæva nec anguiferos extende, Calumnia, rictus ;
 In me triste nihil, fœdissima turba, potestis,
 Nec vestri sum juris ego ; securâque tutus
 Pectora, vipereo gradiar sublimis ab ictu.

At tibi, chare pater, postquam non æqua merenti
 Posse referre datur, nec dona rependere factis,
 Sit memorâsse satis, repetitâque munera grato
 Percensere animo, fidæ'que reponere menti.

Et vos, O nostri, juvenilia carmina, lusus,
 Si modò perpetuos sperare audebitis annos,
 Et domini superesse rogo, lucémque tueri,
 Nec spisso rapiunt oblivia nigra sub Orco ;
 Forsitan has laudes, decantatúmque parentis
 Nomen, ad exemplum, sero servabitis ævo.

AD SALSILLUM,

POETAM ROMANUM, ÆGROTANTEM.¹

Scazontes.

O MUSA, gressum quæ volens trahis claudum,
 Vulcaniôque tarda gaudes incessu,
 Nec sentis illud in loco minus gratum,
 Quàm cùm decentes flava Dëiope suras

¹ Giovanni Salsilli had complimented Milton at Rome in a Latin tetrastich, for his Greek, Latin, and Italian poetry. Milton, in return, sent these elegant Scazontes to Salsilli when indisposed.

Alternat aureum ante Junonis lectum ;
Adesdum, et hæc s'is verba pauca Salsillo
Refer, Camœna nostra cui tantum est cordi,
Quámque ille magnis prætulit immeritò divis.
Hæc ergo alumnus ille Londini Milto,
Diebus hisce qui suum linquens nidum,
Polique tractum, pessimus ubi ventorum,
Insanientis impoténsque pulmonis,
Pernix anhela sub Jove exercet flabra,
Venit feraces Itali soli ad glebas,
Visum superbâ cognitas urbes famâ,
Virósque, doctæque indolem juventutis.
Tibi optat idem hic fausta multa, Salsille,
Habitúmque fesso corpori penitùs sanum ;
Cui nunc profunda bilis infestat renes,
Præcordiisque fixa damnosùm spirat.
Nec id pepercit impia, quòd tu Romano
Tam cultus ore Lesbium condis melos.

O dulce divùm munus, O Salus, Hebes
Germana ! Tuque, Phœbe, morborum terror,
Pythone cæso, sive tu magis Pæan
Libentèr audis, hic tuus sacerdos est.
Querceta Fauni, vósque rore vinoso
Colles benigni, mitis Evandri sedes,
Siquid salubre vallibus frondet vestris,
Levamen ægro ferte certatim vati.
Sic ille, charis redditus rursùm Musis,
Vicina dulci prata mulcebit cantu.
Ipse inter atros emirabitur lucos
Numa, ubi beatum degit otium æternum,
Suam reclinis semper Ægeriam spectans.
Tumidúsque et ipse Tiberis, hinc delinitus,
Spei favebit annuæ colonorum ;
Nec in sepulchris ibit obsessum reges,

Nimiùm sinistro laxus irruens loro ;
Sed fræna meliùs temperabit undarum,
Adusque curvi salsa regna Portumni.

MANSUS.¹

Joannes Baptista Mansus, Marchio Villensis, vir ingenii laude, tum literarum studio, nec non et bellicâ virtute, apud Italos clarus in primis est. An quem Torquati Tassi Dialogus extat De Amicitia scriptus; erat enim Tassi amicissimus; ab quo etiam inter Campaniæ principes celebratur, in illo poemate cui titulus GERUSALEMME CONQUISTATA, lib. 20.

" Fra cavaller magnanimi, è cortesi,
Risplende il MANSO."

Is authorem Neapoli commorantem summâ benevolentîâ prosecutus est, multâque ei detulit humanitatis officia. Ad hunc itaque hospes ille, antequam ab eâ urbe discederet, ut ne ingratum se ostenderet, hoc carmen misit.

HÆC quoque, Manse, tuæ meditantur carmina laudi
Pierides, tibi, Manse, choro notissime Phœbi ;
Quandoquidem ille alium haud æquo est dignatus honore,
Post Galli cineres, et Mecænates Hetrusci.
Tu quoque, si nostræ tantùm valet aura Camœnæ,
Victrices hederas inter laurósque sedebis.
Te pridem magno felix concordia Tasso
Junxit, et æternis inscripsit nomina chartis :
Mox tibi dulciloquum non inscia Musa Marinum
Tradidit ; ille tuum dici se gaudet alumnum,
Dum canit Assyrios divûm prolixus amores ;
Mollis et Ausonias stupefecit carmine nymphas.
Ille itidem moriens tibi soli debita vates
Ossa, tibi soli, supremâque vota reliquit :
Nec manes pietas tua chara fefellit amici ;
Vidimus arridentem operoso ex ære poetam.

¹ At Naples, Milton was introduced to Giovanni Battista Manso, Marquis of Villa, who had been the friend of Tasso; and Milton, at leaving Naples, sent this poem to him.

Nec satis hoc visum est in utrumque, et nec pia cessant
Officia in tumulto ; cupis integros rapere Orco,
Quà potes, atque avidas Parcarum eludere leges :
Amborum genus, et variâ sub sorte peractam
Describis vitam, morésque, et dona Minervæ ;
Æmulus illius, Mycalen qui natus ad altam
Rettulit Æolii vitam facundus Homeri.
Ergo ego te, Cliûs et magni nomine Phœbi,
Manse pater, jubeo longum salvere per ævum,
Missus Hyperboreo juvenis peregrinus ab axe.
Nec tu longinquam bonus aspernabere Musam,
Quæ nuper gelidâ vix enutrita sub Arcto,
Imprudens, Italas ausa est volitare per urbes.
Nos etiam in nostro modulantes flumine cygnos
Credimus obscuras noctis sensisse per umbras,
Quà Thamesis late puris argenteus urnis
Oceani glaucos perfundit gurgite crines :
Quin et in has quondam pervenit Tityrus oras.

Sed neque nos genus incultum, nec inutile Phœbo,
Quà plaga septeno mundi sulcata Trione
Brumalem patitur longâ sub nocte Boöten.
Nos etiam colimus Phœbum, nos munera Phœbo
Flaventes spicas, et lutea mala canistris,
Halantémque crocum, perhibet nisi vana vetustas,
Misimus, et lectas Druidum de gente choreas.
Gens Druides antiqua, sacris operata deorum,
Heroum laudes, imitandâque gesta, caneant ;
Hinc quoties festo cingunt altaria cantu,
Delo in herbosâ, Graiæ de more puellæ,
Carminibus lætis memorant Corinëida Loxo,
Fatidicâque Upin, cum flavicomâ Hecaërge,
Nuda Caledonio variatas pectora fuco.

Fortunate senex, ergo, quacunque per orbem
Torquati decus, et nomen celebrabitur ingens,

Clarâque perpetui succrescet fama Marini ;
Tu quoque in ora frequens venies plausúmque virorum,
Et parili carpes iter immortale volatu.
Dicetur tum sponte tuos habitâsse penates
Cynthius, et famulas venisse ad limina Musas :
At non sponte domum tamen idem, et regis adivit
Rura Pheretiadæ, cœlo fugitivus Apollo ;
Ille licèt magnum Alciden suscepit hospes ;
Tantùm ubi clamosos placuit vitare bubulcos,
Nobile mansueti cessit Chironis in antrum,
Irriguos inter saltus, frondosâque tecta,
Peneium propè rivum : ibi sæpe sub ilice nigrâ,
Ad citharæ strepitum, blandâ prece victus amici,
Exilii duros lenibat voce labores.

Tum neque ripa suo, barathro nec fixa sub imo
Saxa stetero loco ; nutat Trachinia rupes,
Nec sentit solitas, immania pondera, silvas ;
Emotæque suis properant de collibus orni,
Mulcentúrque novo maculosi carmine lynces.

Dûs dilecte senex, te Jupiter æquus oportet
Nascentem, et miti lustrârit lumine Phœbus,
Atlantisque nepos ; neque enim, nisi charus ab ortu
Diis superis, poterit magno favisse poetæ.
Hinc longæva tibi lento sub flore senectus
Vernat, et Æsonios lucratur vivida fusos ;
Nondum deciduos servans tibi frontis honores,
Ingeniúmque vicens, et adultum mentis acumen.
O mihi si mea sors talem concedat amicum,
Phœbæos decorâsse viros qui tam benè nôrit,
Siquandò indigenas revocabo in carmina reges,
Arturúmque etiam sub terris bella moventem !
Aut dicam invictæ sociali fœdere mensæ
Magnanimos heroas ; et, O modo spiritus adsit,
Frangam Saxonicas Britonum sub Marte phalanges !

Tandem ubi non tacitæ permensus tempora vitæ,
 Annorùmque satur, cineri sua jura relinquam,
 Ille mihi lecto madidis astaret ocellis,
 Astanti sat erit si dicam, sim tibi curæ ;
 Ille meos artus, liventi morte solutos,
 Curaret parvâ componi mollitè urnâ :
 Forsitan et nostros ducat de marmore vultus,
 Nectens aut Paphiâ myrti aut Parnasside lauri
 Fronde comas, at ego securâ pace quiescam.
 Tum quoque, si qua fides, si præmia certa bonorum,
 Ipse ego cælicolûm semotus in æthera divûm,
 Quò labor et mens pura vehunt, atque ignea virtus,
 Secreti hæc aliquâ mundi de parte videbo,
 Quantum fata sinunt ; et, totâ mente serenum
 Ridens, purpureo suffundar lumine vultus,
 Et simul æthereo plaudam mihi lætus Olympo.

EPITAPHIUM DAMONIS.

ARGUMENTUM.

Thyrsis et Damon, ejusdem viciniæ pastores, eadem studia sequuti, à pueritiâ amici erant, ut qui plurimùm. Thyrsis animi causâ profectus peregrè de obitu Damonis nuncium accepit. Demùm postea reversus, et rem ità esse comperto, se, suâque solitudinem hoc carmine deplorat. Damonis autem sub personâ hic intelligitur *Carolus Deodatus* ex urbe *Hetruriæ Lucâ* paterno genere oriundus, cætera *Anglus* ; ingenio, doctrinâ, clarissimisque cæteris virtutibus, dum viveret, juvenis egregius.¹

HIMERIDES nymphæ (nam vos et Daphnin, et Hylan,
 Et plorata diu meministis fata Bionis),

¹ Charles Deodate's father, Theodore, was born at Geneva, of an Italian family, in 1574. He came young into England, where he married an English lady of good birth and fortune. He was a doctor in physic ; and, in 1609, appears to have been physician to prince Henry, and the princess Elizabeth, afterwards queen of Bohemia.

Dicite Sicelicum Thamesina per oppida carmen :
Quas miser effudit voces, quæ murmura Thyrsis,
Et quibus assiduis exercuit antra querelis,
Flumináque, fontésque vagos, nemorúmque recessus ;
Dum sibi præreptum queritur Damona, neque altam
Luctibus exemit noctem, loca sola pererrans.
Et jam bis viridi surgebat culmus aristâ,
Et totidem flavas numerabant horrea messes,
Ex quo summa dies tulerat Damona sub umbras,
Nec dum aderat Thyrsis ; pastorem scilicèt illum
Dulcis amor Musæ Thuscâ retinebat in urbe :
Ast ubi mens expleta domum, pecorisque relictæ
Cura vocat, simul assetuâ seditque sub ulmo,
Tum verò amissum tum denique sentit amicum,
Cœpit et immensum sic exonerare dolorem.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Hei mihi ! quæ terris, quæ dicam numina cœlo,
Postquam te immiti rapuerunt funere, Damon !
Siccine nos linquis, tua sic sine nomine virtus
Ibit, et obscuris numero sociabitur umbris ?
At non ille, animas virgâ qui dividit aureâ,
Ista velit, dignúmque tui te ducat in agmen,
Ignavúmque procul pecus arceat omne silentúm.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Quicquid erit, certè nisi me lupo ante videbit,
Indeplorato non comminuere sepulchro,
Constabitque tuus tibi honos, longúmque vigebit
Inter pastores : Illi tibi vota secundo
Solvere post Daphnin, post Daphnin dicere laudes,
Gaudebunt, dum rura Pales, dum Faunus, amabit :
Si quid id est, priscámque fidem coluisse, piúmque,
Palladiásque artes, sociúmque habuisse canorum.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Hæc tibi certa manent, tibi erunt hæc præmia, Damon ;

At mihi quid tandem fiet modò? quis mihi fidus
Hærebit lateri comes, ut tu sæpe solebas
Frigoribus duris, et per loca fœta pruinis,
Aut rapido sub sole, siti morientibus herbis?
Sive opus in magnos fuit eminùs ire leones,
Aut avidos terrere lupos præsepibus altis;
Quis fando sopire diem, cantúque, solebit?

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Pectora cui credam? quis me lenire docebit
Mordaces curas, quis longam fallere noctem
Dulcibus alloquiis, grato cùm sibilat igni
Molle pyrum, et nucibus strepitat focus et malus Auster
Miscet cuncta foris, et desuper intonat ulmo?

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Aut æstate, dies medio dum vertitur axe,
Cùm Pan æsculeâ somnum capit abditus umbrâ,
Et repetunt sub aquis sibi nota sedilia nymphæ,
Pastorésque latent, stertit sub sepe colonus;
Quis mihi blanditiásque tuas, quis tum mihi risus,
Cecropiósque sales referet, cultosque lepores?

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
At jam solus agros, jam pascua solus oberro,
Sicubi ramosæ densantur vallibus umbræ;
Hïc serum expecto; supra caput imber et Eurus
Triste sonant, fractæque agitata crepuscula silvæ.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Heu, quam culta mihi priùs arva procacibus herbis
Involvuntur, et ipsa situ seges alta fatiscit!
Innuba neglecto marcescit et uva racemo,
Nec myrteta juvant; ovium quoque tædet, at illæ
Mœrent, in'que suum convertunt ora magistrum.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Tityrus ad corylos vocat, Alphesibœus ad ornos,
Ad salices Aegon, ad flumina pulcher Amyntas;

“ Hîc gelidi fontes, hîc illita gramina musco,
Hîc Zephyri, hîc placidas interstrepit arbutus undas :”
Ista canunt surdo, frutices ego nactus, abibam.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Mopsus ad hæc, nam me redeuntem forte notârat,
(Et callebat avium linguas, et sidera Mopsus),
“ Thyrsi, quid hoc ?” dixit, “ quæ te coquit improba bilis ?
Aut te perdit amor, aut te malè fascinat astrum ;
Saturni grave sæpe fuit pastoribus astrum,
Intimâque obliquo figit præcordia plumbo.”

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Mirantur nymphæ, et “ quid te, Thyrsi, futurum est ?
Quid tibi vis ?” aiunt ; “ non hæc solet esse juventæ
Nubila frons, oculique truces, vultúsque severi ;
Illa choros, lusúsque leves, et semper amorem
Jure petit ; bis ille miser qui serus amavit.”

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Venit Hyas, Dryopéque, et filia Baucidis Aegle,
Docta modos, citharæque sciens, sed perdita fastu ;
Venit Idumanii Chloris vicina fluenti ;
Nil me blanditiæ, nil me solantia verba,
Nil me, si quid adest, movet, aut spes ulla futuri.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Hei mihi ! quam similes ludunt per prata juvenci,
Omnes unanimi secum sibi lege sodales !
Nec magis hunc alio quisquam secernit amicum
De grege ; sic densi veniunt ad pabula thoes,
In'que vicem hirsuti paribus junguntur onagri :
Lex eadem pelagi ; deserto in littore Proteus
Agmina Phocarum numerat, vilisque volucrum
Passer habet semper quicum sit, et omnia circum
Farra libens volitet, serò sua tecta revisens ;
Quem si sors letho objecit, seu milvus adunco
Fata tulit rostro, seu stravit arundine fossor,
Protinùs ille alium socio petit inde volatu.

Nos durum genus, et diris exercita fatis
 Gens homines, aliena animis, et pectore discors ;
 Vix sibi quisque parem de millibus invenit unum ;
 Aut si sors dederit tandèm non aspera votis,
 Illum inopina dies, quâ non speraveris horâ,
 Surripit æternum linquens in sæcula damnum.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Heu quis me ignotas traxit vagus error in oras
 Ire per aëreas rupes, Alpémque nivosam !
 Ecquid erat tanti Romam vidisse sepultam,
 (Quamvis illa foret, qualem dum viseret olim,
 Tityrus ipse suas et oves et rura reliquit ;)
 Ut te tam dulci possem caruisse sodale !
 Possem tot maria alta, tot interponere montes,
 Tot silvas, tot saxa tibi, fluviósque sonantes !
 Ah certè extremùm licuisset tangere dextram,
 Et benè compositos placidè morientis ocellos,
 Et dixisse, " Vale, nostrî memor ibis ad astra."

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Quamquam etiam vestrî nunquam meminisse pigebit,
 Pastores Thusci, Musis operata juvenus,
 Hic Charis, atque Lepos ; et Thuscus tu quoque Damon,
 Antiquâ genus unde petis Lucumonis ab urbe.
 O ego quantus eram, gelidi cùm stratus ad Arni
 Murmura, populeúmque nemus, quâ mollior herba,
 Carpere nunc violas, nunc summas carpere myrtos,
 Et potui Lycidæ certantem audire Menalcam !
 Ipse etiam tentare ausus sum ; nec, puto, multùm
 Displicui ; nam sunt et apud me, munera vestra,
 Fiscellæ, calathique, et cerea vincla cicutæ :
 Quin et nostra suas docuerunt nomina fagos
 Et Datis,¹ et Francinus, erant et vocibus ambo
 Et studiis noti, Lydorum sanguinis ambo.

¹ Carlo Dati of Florence, with whom Milton corresponded after his return to England.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Hæc mihi tum læto dictabat roscida luna,
 Dum solus teneros claudebam cratibus hædos.
 Ah quoties dixi, cùm te cinis ater habebat,
 Nunc canit, aut lepori nunc tendit retia Damon,
 Vimina nunc texit, varios sibi quod sit in usus !
 Et quæ tum facili sperabam mente futura
 Arripui voto levis, et præsentia finxi ;
 “ Heus bone ! numquid agis ? nisi te quid fortè retardat,
 Imus ? et argutâ paulùm recubamus in umbrâ,
 Aut ad aquas Colni, aut ubi jugera Cassibelauni ?
 Tu mihi percurres medicos, tua gramina, succos,
 Helleborùmque, humilésque crocos, foliùmque hyacinthi,
 Quasque habet ista palus herbas, artésque medentùm.”
 Ah pereant herbæ, pereant artésque medentùm,
 Gramina, postquam ipsi nil profecere magistro !
 Ipse etiam, nam nescio quid mihi grande sonabat
 Fistula, ab undecimâ jam lux est altera nocte,
 Et tum fortè novis admôram labra cicutis,
 Dissiluire tamen ruptâ compage, nec ultra
 Ferre graves potuere sonos : dubito quoque ne sim
 Turgidulus, tamen et referam ; vos cedite, silvæ.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Ipse ego Dardanias Rutupina per æquora puppes
 Dicam, et Pandrasidos regnum vetus Inogeniæ,
 Brennùmque Arviragùmque duces, priscùmque Belinum,
 Et tandem Armoricos Britonum sub lege colonos ;
 Tum gravidam Arturo, fatali fraude, Iögernen,
 Mendaces vultus, assumptâque Gorlöis arma,
 Merlini dolus. O mihi tum si vita supersit,
 Tu procul annosâ pendebis, fistula, pinu,
 Multùm oblita mihi ; aut patriis mutata Camœnis
 Brittonicum strides, quid enim ? omnia non licet uni,
 Non sperâsse uni licet omnia, mî satis ampla

Merces, et mihi grande decus (sim ignotus in ævum
Tum licèt, externo penitùsque inglorius orbi),
Si me flava comas legat Usa, et potor Alauni,
Vorticibúsque frequens Abra, et nemus omne Treantæ,
Et Thamesis meus ante omnes, et fusca metallis
Tamara, et extremis me discant Orcades undis.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agui.
Hæc tibi servabam lentâ sub cortice lauri,
Hæc, et plura simul; tum quæ mihi pocula Mansus,
Mansus, Chalcidicæ non ultima gloria ripæ,
Bina dedit, mirum artis opus, mirandus et ipse,
Et circum gemino cælaverat argumento:
In medio rubri maris unda, et odoriferum ver,
Littora longa Arabum, et sudantes balsama silvæ,
Has inter Phœnix, divina avis, unica terris,
Cæruleùm fulgens diversicoloribus alis,
Auroram vitreis surgentem respicit undis;
Parte aliâ polus omnipatens, et magnus Olympus:
Quis putet? hîc quoque Amor, pictæque in nube pharetræ,
Arma corusca faces, et spicula tincta pyropo;
Nec tenues animas, pectúsque ignobile vulgi,
Hinc ferit; at, circum flammantia lumina torquens,
Semper in erectum spargit sua tela per orbes
Impiger, et pronos nunquam collimat ad ictus:
Hinc mentes ardere sacræ, formæque deorum.

Tu quoque in his, nec me fallit spes lubrica, Damon,
Tu quoque in his certè es, nam quò tua dulcis abiret
Sanctâque simplicitas, nam quò tua candida virtus?
Nec te Lethæo fas quæsivisse sub orco,
Nec tibi conveniunt lacrymæ, nec flebimus ultra:
Ite procul, lacrymæ; purum colit æthera Damon,
Æthera purus habet, pluvium pede reppulit arcum;
Heroúmque animas inter, divósque perennes,
Æthereos haurit latices, et gaudia potat

Ore sacro. Quin tu, cœli post jura recepta,
 Dexter ades, placidusque fave quicunque vocaris,
 Seu tu noster eris Damon, sive æquior audis
 Diodatus, quo te divino nomine cuncti
 Cœlicolæ nôrint, silvisque vocabere Damon.
 Quòd tibi purpureus pudor, et sine labe juvenus
 Grata fuit, quòd nulla tori libata voluptas,
 En etiam tibi virginei servantur honores ;
 Ipse caput nitidum cinctus rutilante coronâ,
 Lætâque frondentis gestans umbracula palmæ,
 Æternùm perages immortales hymenæos ;
 Cantus ubi, choreisque fuit lyra mista beatis,
 Festa Sionæo bacchantur et Orgia thyrsos.

Jan. 23, 1646.

AD JOANNEM ROUSIUM,

OXONIENSIS ACADEMIÆ BIBLIOTHECARIUM.¹

De libro Poematum amisso, quem ille sibi denuò mitti postulabat, ut cum aliis nostris in Bibilothecâ publicâ reponeret, Ode.

Ode tribus constat Strophis, totidémque Antistrophis, unâ demum Epodo clausis ; quas, tametsi omnes nec versuum numero, nec certis ubique colis exactè respondeant, ità tamen secuimus, commodè legendi potius, quàm ad antiquos concinendi modos rationem spectantes. Alioquin hoc genus rectiùs fortassè dici monostrophicum debuerat. Metra partim sunt *κατὰ σχέσιν*, partim *ἀπολελυμένα*. Phaleucia quæ sunt, Spondæum tertio loco bis admittunt, quod idem in secundo loco Catullus ad libitum fecit.

STROPHE I.

GEMELLE cultu simplici gaudens liber,
 Fronde licèt geminâ,

¹ John Rouse, or Russe, Master of Arts, Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, was elected chief librarian of the Bodleian, May 9, 1620. He died in April 1652, and was buried in the chapel of his college.

Munditiéque nitens non operosâ !
 Quem manus attulit
 Juvenilis olim,
 Sedula tamèn haud nimii poetæ ;
 Dum vagus Ausonias nunc per umbras,
 Nunc Britannica per vireta lusit,
 Insons populi, barbitóque devius
 Indulsit patrio, mox itidem pectine Daunio
 Longinquum intonuit melos
 Vicinis, et humum vix tetigit pede :

ANTISTROPHE.

Quis te, parve liber, quis te fratribus
 Subduxit reliquis dolo ?
 Cùm tu missus ab urbe,
 Docto jugitèr obsecrante amico,
 Illustre tendebas iter
 Thamesis ad incunabula
 Cærulei patris,
 Fontes ubi limpidi
 Aonidum, thyasúsque sacer,
 Orbi notus per immensos
 Temporum lapsus redeunte cœlo,
 Celebérque futurus in ævum ?

STROPHE II.

Modò quis deus, aut editus deo,
 Pristinam gentis miseratus indolem,
 (Si satis noxas luimus priores,
 Mollique luxu degener otium),
 Tollat nefandos civium tumultus,
 Almáque revocet studia sanctus,
 Et relegatas sine sede Musas
 Jam penè totis finibus Angligenûm ;

Immundásque volucres,
Unguibus imminentes,
Figat Apollineâ pharetrâ,
Phineámque abigat pestem procul anne Pegasëo ?

ANTISTROPHE.

Quin tu, libelle, nuntii licèt malâ
Fide, vel oscitantiâ,
Semel erraveris agmine fratrum,
Seu quis te teneat specus,
Seu qua te latebra, forsán unde vili
Callo tereris institoris insulsi,
Lætare felix : en iterum tibi
Spes nova fulget, posse profundam
Fugere Lethen, vehique superam
In Jovis aulam, remige pennâ :

STROPHE III.

Nam te Roüsîus sui
Optat peculî, numeróque justo
Sibi pollicitum queritur abesse ;
Rogátque venias ille, cujus inclyta
Sunt data virûm monumenta curæ :
Téque adytis etiam sacris
Voluit reponi, quibus et ipse præsidet,
Æternorum operum custos fidelis ;
Quæstórque gazæ nobilioris,
Quàm cui præfuit Iön,
Clarus Erechtheides,
Opulenta dei per templa parentis,
Fulvósque tripodas, donáque Delphica,
Iön, Actæâ genitus Creusâ.

ANTISTROPHE.

Ergo, tu visere lucos
Musarum ibis amœnos ;
Diámque Phœbi rursus ibis in domum,
Oxoniâ quam valle colit,
Delo posthabitâ,
Bifidóque Parnassi jugo :
Ibis honestus,
Postquam egregiam tu quoque sortem
Nactus abis, dextri prece sollicitatus amici.
Illic legeris inter alta nomina
Authorum, Graiæ simul et Latinæ
Antiqua gentis lumina, et verum decus.

EPODOS.

Vos tandèm, haud vacui mei labores,
Quicquid hoc sterile fudit ingenium,
Jam serò placidam sperare jubeo
Perfunctam invidiâ requiem, sedésque beatas,
Quas bonus Hermes,
Et tutela dabit solers Roüsi ;
Quò neque lingua procax vulgi penetrabit, atque longè
Turba legentûm prava facesset :
At ultimi nepotes,
Et cordatior ætas,
Judicia rebus æquiora forsitan
Adhibebit, integro sinu.
Tum, livore sepulto,
Si quid meremur sana posteritas sciet,
Roüsio favente.

THE END.

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